

A heros legacy

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Summary: Masterchief wakes up after his long cryo sleep only to learn that everything he once fought for is now history. UNSC, Covenant everything. Can he once again become the humanity's greatest hero or someone else will carry his legacy?

1. Chapter 1:Wake up, Chief

****Disclaimer****:****

****I do not own Halo or Mass Effect.****

****I am a big fan of both Halo and mass effect. I finished both Mass effects and halo1-2 in heroic. (Can't manage to play Halo3 and Reach forâ€¦|..Hey, not everyone can afford an Xbox).I know there's a lot of H/ME crossovers out there already but hey, there is always room for another one right? This is my first attempt at a crossover so tell me what you guys think of it.****

****Please note****:****

****This is AU so do not complain about the storyline being "Non-cannon" or something as like that.****

****In this AU the Asari didn't discover the Citadel in 1080 BCE instead they did ay 580. The Rachni War occurred in 501 CE instead of 1 CE. The Krogan rebellion began in 1200 CE rather than 700 CE. The actual names of the dates will remain the same though (580, 1, 700).Simply put, they will just occur 500 years after what the ME timeline actually says.****

****My English is HORRIBOL so please forgive my grammatical mistakes.****

****Act 1: Big bounty****

****January/11/2662****

****Milky Way/Minos Wasteland/ Caestus system****

****Near planet Temerarus****

****Onboard the Batarians slavers frigate Torment****

Nola, the captain of the batarians frigate shakes his head with disbelief. He's been reading the content of his datapad five times now and he still can't believe the report it contains.

"So let me get these straight, he barked. We just found remains of a ships which is almost as big as a cruiser, which design doesn't match with any known races, don't run on element zero, and is nearly a hundred year old?"

"Precisely, Captain." Gadha, his first officer, replied.

"I don't get it'. Captain says in a confused face. 'The Caestus system is part of one of the most busy slave trade routes, why didn't somebody else picked up that ship on their scanners?"

"It's maybe because the fact that this ship was very well hidden behind the asteroid," Gadha replied. "We ourselves probably wouldn't find it unless we haven't used this asteroid to hide from that Turian patrol frigate."

"Okay, what do you think we should do with it? Blow it up?" Nola asks.

"Captain you are an idiot!" Gadha snapped. "Think about it, an unknown ship which doesn't run on eezo can't you imagine the possibilities? This ship may use a method of FTL travel which doesn't need element zero to function! "

"Did it occur in your fat head that ship may not have a FTL drive?" Nola replied in a tone that made Gadha's skin crawl. He knew that Nola didn't become captain of the Torment because of his capability; he became captain because he slaughtered every one of his competitors before assassinating the Torment's former captain.

"This system does not have any native intelligent race, Gadha replied with awe. And the ship is too small to be a sleeper sleep, so it must have a FTL drive."

Nola lets out an irritated growl. "Even if the ship dose has a FTL drive that does not use eezo, how the hell we're suppose to use it?" He asks with frustration.

"If we can't use it we sure can sell it." Gadha pointed out. "The Hegemony or any other council races will pay handsomely for a FTL drive that doesn't use eezo. Besides, he smirked; the ship is form an unknown race and nearly a hundred years old. Every part of that ship can be sold as a high-value piece of alien artifact. Captain, that ship IS a goldmine!"

True, Nloa thought. He doesn't count much on the Hegemony but any of the council races will easily pay millions for a FTL drive that doesn't run on eezo. And after the words about this ship will get into public any artifact collector will pay high price for any parts of that ship.

But there is a problem, he reminded himself. His ship is currently delivering a very important "cargo" which, if delivered within next five days will get them 70000 credits. Then again, he thought, this ship is a much bigger prize and also he remembered the "cargo" is a researcher who supposes to have a vast knowledge about alien technology.

"She may come in handy," he muttered. Then he spoke out loud. "Okay Gadha, you win. Board the ship and capture anything that looks valuable."

"At once, captain." Gadha replied and quickly went out to gather a team to board the unknown alien ship.

Nola watches as he left, a sinister smile started to cover his face. As soon we find the FTL drive Gadha, He thought himself; I am going to give you a present that involves one of the Torment's famed airlocks.

****Act 2: Sweet dreamsâ€|.No more****

****January/11/2662****

****Milky Way/Minos Wasteland/ Caestus system****

****Near planet Temerarus****

****Onboard the derelict ship.****

"Chief? Can you hear me? "

John-117, better known as Master Chief slowly opens his eyes. He is in a cryo pod, he can hear it opening up but where is he? There is no light, no people just a small glowing human figure in a pedestal that look likeâ€|..

"Chief!"

Suddenly, everything about the past started to flow in his mind. He remembers the Human-Covenant war, The Battle of Erath, The battle of installation 00 and most importantlyâ€|.he remembers
â€|..

Cortana!

"Chief! I need you!"

Chief immediately jumps out of the pod and extract Cortana's data chip from the pedestal then insert it on his helmet.

"I'm here."

Cortana lets out a relieving sigh. "I thought I'd lost you."

"What's going on?" Chief asks in his normal business like manor.

"There's a ship nearby!" Cortana states in a near panic tone,

"Calm down. Is it Covenant?"

"I don't know." Cortana admits with a little bit of frustration. "The Dawns sensors are virtually toast. We were damm lucky that the proximity sensorsâ€¦."

"Don't worry, whoever or whatever they are I'm sure we can handle them". Chief reached out to where he had secured his MA5C Assault Rifle.

"Umâ€¦chief?" Cortana interrupts.

"Yes?"

"You do know that we are in the vacuum of space and that thing needs air to fire, right?" Cortana asks.

"You know sometimes I hate it when you are right," Chief replied. "Okay, what's plan B?"

"There is an armory two room ahead of us; I think Arbiter was generous enough to left at least a couple of plasma rifles there." Cortana replied.

"Let's go." Chief said.

****Act 3: The Forward Unto Dawn****

****January/11/2662****

****Milky Way/Minos Wasteland/ Caestus system****

****Near planet Temerarus****

****Onboard the Batarian boarding shuttle.****

"Two hundred meters." The pilot reported as the shuttle slowly edged towards the derelict ship, two short burst from its forward thrusters slowing their approach until they were drifting forward at a little over walking pace. Gadha only nodded in acknowledgement before activating the powerful spot-light built into the nose of the shuttle, its bright beam casting long shadows as it passed along the battered hull.

"Wherever she's from, she took one hell of a beating," Boka, one of the slavers pointed at what had been agreed on as the "front" of the unknown ship, "it's almost like someone cut it in two with a knife."

"No, not a knife," Gadha leaned forward, "see the edges? Scorch marks: something must have melted through the hull in an instant, like an industrial laser cutting sheet metal."

"Are you saying that something or someone cut this thing in half?" The pilot did his best to suppress the shiver running down his spine, "Gadha, is this ship really worth boardingâ€¦?"

"Just do your job pilot!" Gadha Barked. The pilot quickly shook his head and re-focused his mind on the shuttle's control panel. The shuttle zoomed towards the derelict craft, landing in one of the many

openings. The shuttle's doors opened and about one and a half dozen Batarian slavers popped out, floating at first, but then their magnetic boots kicked in, allowing them to walk across the floor as though there was gravity. They all had their assault rifles out, ready to fire. It was highly unlikely they would encounter any hostiles, but one could never be too careful.

"Clear." Boka said. With that, Gadha stepped out of the shuttle, wearing a MK-IV Partisan Armor, and armed with a MK-VII Terminator Assault Rifle and a Judgment MK-V pistol. HE took a look around and then put two fingers on the side of his helmet.

"Everyone listen up!" Gadha spoke up. "We're here to salvage anything from this ship that looks valuable; it's obvious that this ship was a warship so Team Alpha will look for the armory and any weapons we can use, Team Bravo will look for the engine room, I will lead team omega and look for the bridge and boka, you and the rest will guard the shuttle. Any question?" He asked.

There was a moment of silence.

"Alright, let's move." Gadha said. The slavers proceeded forward into the deep interior of the once proud Charon-class light frigate **UNSC ***Forward Unto Dawn.**

Little did they know about the fate awaits them.

Act 4: Arbiters generosity

January/11/2662

Milky Way/Minos Wasteland/ Caestus system

Near planet Temerarus

Onboard the UNSC Forward Unto Dawn.

"Well, I never thought he would be THIS generous!" Cortana commented with a wide grin in her face.

Chief had to agree with Cortana's comment; the armory was literally piled with covenant weapons, everything from Type-25 Directed Energy Pistol (Plasma Pistol) to Type-51 Carbine (Covenant Carbine) were floating in the armory.

"_If I manage to get back to earth alive, I will get that guy a glass ofâ€¦...whatever liquid Sangheili's drink.." _Chief promised himself.

He quickly grabbed two bandoleers of Grenades, followed by a Type-51 Carbine (Covenant Carbine) and pairs of Type-25 Directed Energy Rifle (Plasma Rifle) and Type-33 Guided Munitions Launcher (Needler). Slipping a number of spare magazines for the Carbine and the Needlers into a rucksack, he lifted it onto his shoulders, careful to stop it dislodging his Carbine from its place behind his right shoulder. Securing the straps around his body, he attached a Needler to each thigh, below the Rifles. He then grabbed a Type-52 Directed Energy Support Weapon (Plasma Cannon) and made doubly sure that it was fully loaded before turning and heading for the exit.

"Attention intruders! Armageddon coming trough!" Cortana cheerfully declarers' as chief started to walk through the hallway using his magnetic boots.

****Well there you go the first part. And before anyone asks I am going to clear two things****

****The reasons that chief survived so long in cryo will be explained in the following chapters so don't complain about that. ****

****I know in the real** **Caestus system doesn't have an asteroid field but in these AU there is a rather large one near planet Temerarus.****

****And again ****please forgive my grammatical/spelling mistakes.****

****And finally,****

****Please R&R.****

2. Chapter 2:Unknown contacts

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****Act 1: Excuse meâ€|.Who were you?****

****January/11/2662****

****Milky Way/Minos Wasteland/ Caestus system****

****Near planet Temerarus****

****Onboard the UNSC Forward Unto Dawn.****

"Chief, contacts!" Cortana reported as soon as Chief reached the dining hall.

"Understood." Chief replied as he took cover behind the long abounded food counter, with his plasma cannon ready to fire.

"Hungry, Chief?" Cortana sarcastically asks as a long frozen tray of potato mash flows pasts the Chief's visor.

"How many contacts?" Chief quickly asks to avoid the question. While the nutrient injection system in the Cryopods is sufficient enough to keep a body stable in cryosleep, it wasn't designed to take care of the serious post-croyosleep hunger issue which currently Chief's going through.

"Four life forms entering via the main door," Cortana replied in a more serious tone then before. "And one other thing, she also added, they're not covenant and they're definitely not humans."

Chief nodded as a sign of acknowledgement and then raise his head slightly to take a look at the Aliens through the counters display window. He, along with Cortana was quite surprise to see four human like figure walking through the dining tables.

"Are you sure that they are not humans?" Chief asks in a slightly amused tone.

"Positive Chief," Cortana replies in a slightly irritated voice. "They may look like humans but their DNA Struthers are way different than ours."

"_They are too heavily armed and armored to be civilians_, " Chief thought while observing the aliens, "_but given their rather undisciplined movement, they are not any military force either."_

"_These guys are either pirates or scavengers,"_ Chief came to a conclusion_. "If so, he thought himself, they are probably here toâ€¦|_"

"They are here to salvage the Dawn," Cortana completes chiefs thought. "Well chief, I think it's time for us to introduce ourselves. I'm sure that their civilized enough to lend us a rideâ€¦|.."

She was interrupted by Chief as he noticed increased activity among the aliens. Apparently, one of them found a MA5C Assault Rifle and he is not so willing to share his prize with the apparent leader of the team. After a brief heated conversation, the leader suddenly pulled his pistol and shot the other alien in point blank range, killing him. The other two aliens quickly started to strip the dead alien form anything useful while the leader started to examine his newly "acquired" prize.

"You're sure their civilized?" Chief asks in an amused tone.

"We should wait until they leave this room, then we can search the corps, those guys might leave something useful." Cortana quickly avoided the question. Chief couldn't help but imagine Cortana with a blushing face.

"Why wait," he replied, "I don't think these guys will beâ€¦|.."

He was interrupted as the lead alien pulled the trigger of the MA5C. To his surprise, the gun fired, spraying a large number of bullets on its intended target: the dead alien. The alien shook his head with satisfaction as he draw a knife to forge a mark in the rifle.

"That Rifle is using self-contained rounds! Whose rifle was that?" Cortana was as surprised as Chief was.

The same question was going through Chief's mind, during the last days of the Human-Covenant War, UNSC was in short supply of resource, to compensate that, UNSC took many steps. One of them was limiting the uses of self-contained rounds. SCR was only available in high value installations and ships (MAC platforms, Marathon Class cruisers ETC) and to ODSs, Spartans and to officers with significant achievements. Others had to make do with normal rounds.

The Dawn dropped all its ODSs during the battle of installation 00 and Chief is quite sure that they took all the SCRs available in Dawn's Armory (He didn't manage to find any before the Battle of citadel). Captain Keys used SMGs so it's not hers, and aside from her there was only one person in the entire force who had personal caches of SCRs and that person isâ€¦|

"_That's Jonson's Rifle!"_ The realization makes Chief feel something he never felt in a long timeâ€¦|**Rage, Blind Rage!**

In a matter of second he dropped his plasma cannon and drew both of his rifles, then, using the upper top of the counter as support, he threw himself to the unsuspecting group of aliens with both of his rifles aiming at the neck of the two aliens who just stood up after looting their former teammate. Before the aliens could even see him, his rifles dual plasma collimator connector cut through their neck like a hot knife through butter, effectively beheading them. As soon as that was done Chief activated his left boots magnetic system attaching him with one of the bolted in table of the mess hall. Using it as an anchor, he performed a perfect back upper kick with his right leg at the remaining alien's neck who was still trying to understand what just happened. Unfortunately for that guy, while his magnetic boots did a perfect job keeping his body attached with the ship's floor, his neck was not so strong. His head turned in to a big pulp of flesh as it hit the ceiling of the ship while a large mist of blood started to emerge where his head was. The entire action happened in less than four seconds.

"Why the hell do you do that?" Cortana was as shocked as she was surprised.

"It's Jonson's Rifle." Chief gave her a short answer as he took the rifle from the now freezing body of the dead alien and slipped it into his rucksack.

"I see." Cortana remained silent for a moment. Then she spoke up again, "chief I'm detecting some sort of computer device into that guy's left arm. Patch me through and I will see what I can dig up."

Chief nodded in acknowledgment as he grabbed the body's left arm. There was a faint golden shimmer as Cortana downloaded herself into the unknown computer device.

****Act 2: Ghost ship****

****January/11/2662****

****Milky Way/Minos Wasteland/ Caestus system****

****Near planet Temerarus****

****Onboard the UNSC Forward Unto Dawn.****

"Something's not right." Ghadha thought as finished scanning the bridge computers of derelict ship. They were wiped clean, and make matters worse, his omni-tools scans tell him that it was done very recently.

"_Is this some kind of trap laid by the Turians? Can't be, this ship

is way too old and alien for that._" He thought as he opened up his radio. "All teams report in." He ordered.

"Bravo here, we found the engine room entrance but its looks like it was sealed shut, and if that's not odd it looks like it was done very recently." Bravo team replied.

"Alpha team what's your status?" Gadha asked. There was only silence." Alpha team response! He barked through radio."

Again there was only silence.

Fear grasped Ghadha's heart_. "Is this ship alive?"_ He thought. "_Or is there's someone or something in this ship that killed Alpha team?"_ Whatever the reason was he had no interest to find out, not with his current size of squad anyway.

"Bravo team, regroup at the shuttle," We will join force and look for alpha squad. He ordered through radio and started to head toward the shuttle.

"_Whatever thing that killed Alpha squad must be dealt with",_ he thought as he and his squad started to walk through the dark gray hallway_, "this ship is too valuable to let go."_

****Act 3: Revelation****

****January/11/2662****

****Milky Way/Minos Wasteland/ Caestus system****

****Near planet Temerarus****

****Onboard the UNSC Forward Unto Dawn.****

"Found anything?" Chief asked as the body's left forearm was suddenly engulfed in what looked like a blue glowing, holographic glove.

There was no answer. After waiting ten minutes Chief grabbed the hand again. There was the familiar cold feeling running down his spine as Cortana returned to his suits on-board systems.

"Sorry about that Chief, that things memory is a lot bigger than it looks," Cortana spoke up through Chief helmet's speakers.

"Apparently, that device is called omni-tool, a kind of all-purpose combat computer; I copied everything that was inside its data-banks. There was a virtual encyclopedia that was stored in it, and it seems to contain generalized information about all the aspects of the universe that is known to them," She continued, "from what it tells us, these aliens are called Batarians and they are salvagers. There is also something about a government called the Citadel Council. This Council is comprised of three species, the Turians, the Asari and the Salarrians. There is also a number of non council species' "allied" with them. All locations administered by the Council are called "Council Space". And apparently they don't have any decent FTL drive they utilize something called "Mass Relays" in order to travel vast distances."

"That wasâ€¦fast." Chief was quite surprised with the fact that

Cortana just translated an alien encyclopedia in such a short notice.

"That thing had a translator system on-board; all I had to do is install an English grammar package." Cortana explained.

"What can you tell me about their weapons?" Chief was about to ask when Cortana interrupted him.

"Chief, Four Batarians in the main hallway." Cortana reported.

Chief nodded in acknowledgment and grabbed the cannon from the counter and then exited the dining hall. He took position at the corner of the hallway that connects the dining hall with the main hallway. Waiting for the enemy's to get close.

"Chief." Cortana spoke up.

"What?" Chief answered.

"I have uploaded their language in your suits translator; we can speak with them if you like." Cortana informed him.

Chief snorted. "Do you want to negotiate with slavers?" He had asked amusedly.

"No," Cortana admitted. "But—"

"Neither do I." Chief cut her off and jumped onto the hallway, with his finger squeezing the trigger of his cannon.

**Well there you go the second part. I know it's a little short but I will try to make it up in the next chapter. **

And again **please forgive my grammatical/spelling mistakes.**

And finally,

Please R&R.

3. Chapter 3: Through the sands of time

Well sorry for the very, very, VERY long wait. My collage life was troublesome and my real life responsibility recently spiked. And truth to be told, the ME3 ending partially ended my interest in the Mass effect universe. I am glad to see that the last chapter generated a review so I hope that I will get a few good reviews. As always enjoy the story.

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****Act 1: Nostalgia****

****January/11/2662****

****Milky Way/Home Cluster/ Sol system****

****High orbit above planet Mars****

****Reyes-McLees Orbital Shipyard, Docking slip 13****

****Onboard ITSS Reach****

Admiral Steven Hackett hides a small yawn as he sat in his chair on the bridge of the ****Imperial Terran Star Ship ****Reach****. He is in command of the 5th Imperial fleet, one of the main 6 battle-ready fleet of the Imperial Navy.

Two months of this. Hackett muttered underneath his breath. He had spent two months on Mars, waiting for the Reach to finish its routine inspection and overhaul and it was taking a bit of a toll on him. Aside from that, being a person who's been fighting wars for the last 159 years, peace is something very hard to get used to.

He knew better than to wish for something other than peace, so He did not complain about the lack of combat. "_Still it wouldn't hurt to have a change of scenery,"_ he thought, "_I'm getting tired of either sleeping in space or on a planet as hot as Mars. Maybe I should request for a transfer to the Imperial Border Security Fleet,"_ Hackett then smiled "_yeah, like the HIGHCOM will just let a Fleet-Admiral walk off whenever he felt like it."_

"Day dreaming again sir?" A voice asked him from behind. Turning his head, he saw Commander David Edward Anderson, the XO of this ship and one of his long time protege and friend.

"What else can I do?" Hackett replied while he stood up and stand in front of his friend. "Ever since the Imperial Border Security Fleet had been established, the pirate raids became their problem; there is no real action for the navy anymore."

Anderson chuckles. "Makes you want to go back to the good old days isn't it?" He asked. "Flying longswords and sabers while blasting Seraphs and Banshees out of space?"

"Yeah." A small smile covered Hackett's face as he remembered the days of Human-Covenant war and the Alliance-Covenant war that followed. Sure it was hell back then, He thought, but now sometimes he really wishes to go back to those days.

Anderson sighed. "Well I'm here to tell you that those tecs of the shipyard are all done looking her up. We are told to make an in-system jump to Pluto to test the newly re-calibrated Hybrid drive system then rendezvous with the fleet."

Hackett scoffed. Ever since the new mass-effect field enhanced slipspace drive became standard for FTL the bigheads of the R&D has gotten into a mania for constantly Upgrade and re-calibrating them. "How long before we can depart?" He asked.

"The shuttle carrying the last of the crew who went on shore leave is entering in the 4th hanger bay," Anderson answered. "Aside from that it'll take some time to warm up the engine and there are always the departing protocols. Sharon will inform you when we are ready to leave."

Hackett nodded and said, "understood Colonel you are dismissed." Anderson shook his head before he turned to leave. The Admiral looked around one more time before he sat down in his chair. It fit a lot better than the old one on the Orion and the new circular CCS style CIC gave a good view of his crew and the surroundings. The seat was real leather too, instead of the standard synthetic imitation.

"_She is a beautiful ship but, I miss the old girl,"_ he thought. While this ship is undoubtedly one of the most powerful ships in the fleet, but unlike her elder sisters she's yet to have her "baptism by fire". And in Hackett's viewpoint, a warship isn't a true warship until it proven itself in combat. Anyway, he's got some time before they can depart, and the conversation with Anderson has left him a little bit nostalgic.

So, after sitting in the seat more comfortably, Hackett closed his eyes and start reviewing everything important happened after the Great Schism, the trueing point of the Human-Covenant War:

****March 3, 2553**** The Human Covenant war is declared over, and the UNSC begins to rebuild, although the Great Schism rages on.

****March 8, 2553**** UNSC finish its contact with military bases around Earth and the surviving Inner colonies, revealing that the casualties from the war, although staggering, was not as high as once thought. Billions died in the war, but it was confirmed that the majority of the Inner Colonies were not glassed, and many left completely untouched, as apparently they were "skipped" when Covenant found Earth before them.

****October 16, 2555: ****ONI Prowlers sent to investigate the status of the outer and middle colonies made a remarkable discovery, they found out that, contrary to popular beliefs, most of the outer and middle (Inner colonies that were captured by Covenant) Colonies were either only partially glassed or left completely untouched. However, most of these planets are now colonized by the brutes and other covenant species and they were using the planets resource to organize and launch another massive offensive against the Heretics and Humans. UNSC, understanding that the war is far from over and they didn't have the technological and logistical effort necessary to take the fight to the covenant, took a step which is the Humanity would prefer not to take, and sent an envoy to the Covenant Separatists for assistance. Under the leadership of newly promoted ex-SPARTAN III supersoldier Commander Athena-B312, who was removed from field after battle of Reach and was transferred to command due her injuries, the frigate UNSC Dawn of light was sent to meet and negotiate a treaty with the Separatists.

****December 10, 2555:****The ****Orion treaty**** between Human and Covenant Separatists has been signed aboard the Separatist _CSO_-class supercarrier Eternal Defiance. The treaty stipulates that:

****1.** If either of the signees is threatened by an outside force that seeks its destruction, the other is to come to their aid.******

2. Any and all disputes between the signees are to be resolved peacefully.

3. If alien technology (including Forerunner) is to be found on any world, then the signees of this treaty are to allow each others access to it.

**4. In case one of the signed faction become embroiled in internal conflict (Ie: Civil war) the other faction will take a neutral position and will only provide humanitarian aid to the conflicting factions and can only intervene if any of the warring sides take an act of aggression against them. **

**5. No espionage is to be conducted between the signees. **

6. The area of the former Covenant Empire is to be recognized as under the jurisdiction of the **Separatists****. With the exception of the former UNSC territories.**

7. As reparation for the damage done by the Separatist in the Human Covenant war the Separatist will:

Give UNSC full access to their technological advances.

Assist with the upgrade of all existing UNSC Ship & facility's.

Help UNSC to reclaim their lost colonies and neutralize the Covenant-Loyalist threat.

Furthermore, for the duration of the upcoming conflict, the Separatist will:

Allow the UNSC to use their shipyards and other facilities and vice versa.

Share 25% of their resource with UNSC.

Hackett smirked when he remember that day. The Orion treaty was undoubtedly a victory for the UNSC, it was not for the UEG. After the war was officially over, Lord Hood had to agree with the UEG's demands of disbanding his Emergency Dictatorship. When it was discovered that the Covenant has taken over many of their former colonies and using them as a staging ground to launch an offensive, it was obvious that UNSC have to strike first and the UEG once again have to give up their authority to Lord Hood. However, the new UEG senate that replaced the original senate which was wiped out along with the **UNSCDF-****ODA-147 "Mecca"** **Orbital Defense Platform** at the start of the Battle of Earth during a routine visit, was filled with corrupted and incompetent senators and they had naturally no interest to give up their power. To make sure the UNSC does not get involved in another war, they originally instructed Commander Athena to make a one-sided treaty with the separatist or simply put, they wanted convince a treaty in which the separatist alone would liberate and reclaim earth's former colonies for UEG. Athena, understanding the separatist would never agree to a treaty like that, instead improvised and proposed the Orion treaty which the separatist gladly accepted. While UEG was very unsatisfied with the treaty because it left them no choice but to surrender their authority to Lord Hood once more. The UNSC on the other hand, was extremely

pleased and the now supreme commander of the UNSC Lord Hood, a Title was previously held by the UEG President, impressed by Athena's achievement, promoted her to the rank of captain and granted her personal request to oversee the design of the first hybrid warship of the UNSC.

****January**** 9, 2556:****** The Orion alliance ****was** officially formed with the UNSC and the Separatists. The alliance officially put the agreements of the Orion treaty to effect. Hundreds if not thousands of Huragok, Unggogy workers and their Sangheili overseers rushed in to upgrade all existing UNSC shipyards and other facilities to Separatists standards, with many Separatists shipyards started to work around the clock as dozens of UNSC vessels docked with them for complete refits, while a number of Separatists ship commander and officers started to exchange knowledge with UNSC ship commander and officers about all known Covenant tactics.

Furthermore, somewhat surprisingly most of the Separatists welcomed Human scientist in their effort to reverse-engineer and most importantly, preserve former Covenant technologies. However not all were pleased with this decision.

And last but most certainly not least, in the high orbit of Sanghelios, inside the royal Sangheili shipyard, a new type of warship prototype, which utilizes both the advance technology of the Separatists and the ruggedness of the UNSC, started to forge in life.

****August ****9, 2556:****After 8 months of back-breaking work, the combined Separatists and human work force successfully upgraded 30% of the existing ships, shipyards and other facilities of the UNSC while repairing multiple crippled Covenant warships over earth orbit into working order. Also, on that they, the UNSC commissioned their first warship that utilizes energy weapons and Shields as standards. It was also the first Human ship to be equipped with an Element zero or "Ezzo" core which utilizes a new form of technology called "Mass effect" by human scientists. The technology was acquired from an ancient alien outpost located in Mars which was discovered during the rapid expansion of the Misriah Armory during 2550. This new technology enabled the ship to move faster than any other ships of its size in both real-time and slipspace, allowed its MAC rounds to achieve twice the velocity than its supposed to be capable of and most importantly, it allowed the utilize a new form of shield named the "Kinetic barrier" by UNSC. In paper, the Kinetic barriers are repulsive mass effect fields projected from emitters. In simple terms, Kinetic barriers are a kind of shields that are capable of deflecting solid objects traveling at rapid velocities. While being virtually useless against energy weapons, this new kind of shields is enveloped over the conventional energy shield of the ship for added protection while also working as a low-energy consuming hazard deflector. This barrier also enabled the ship to fire its ordnance's like Missiles and torpedoes without completely exposing the ship hull to enemy fire as Kinetic barriers stopped things from getting in, not out. The Banshee, as it was named, upon launch it became the most effective and versatile ship of the UNSC. The ships command was given to Captain Athena- B312 by Lord Hood, currently the youngest captain of the UNSC. This left many of the UNSC HIGHCOM personal unsatisfied and in time, question Lord Hood decisions.

****August ****15, 2556:**** Only 6 days after the Banshee was

commissioned, the Covenant launched a massive surprise attack on the Separatists capital Sanghelios. The Sanghelios Planetary Defense Fleet or PDF, while strong, was outnumbered 3 to 1, and had their own communication being jammed by the Covenant thus making them unable to call for reinforcement. The UNSC Banshee, which was still undergoing her final tests in the outskirts of the system however was not affected by the jamming and relayed a distress signal to the elements of the UNSC 5th battlegroup that had just finished its refit in a nearby system and rushed to help the Sanghelios PDF. With the help of the 5th battlegroup forces and the Banshee combined with superior tactics, the SPDF successfully repelled and destroyed 3/4th of the Covenant fleet in the process, while suffering relatively lighter loss to themselves. Furthermore, they managed to disabled and captured the Covenant flagship, a _CSO_-class supercarrier named Indomitable Wrath. The battle became a great gain for the alliance. For not only it played a very key role in strengthening the Human-Separatists Alliance, the capture of the Indomitable Wrath allowed the Alliance to gain vital knowledge about the yet-unknown new Covenant leadership. The Neo-Covenant, which is now led by a "Prophet of sanity", who was like most of the former Covenant Prophet's, is completely opposite to his title in nature. He calmed that the forerunners has gifted him with the knowledge and powers to activate the sacred rings and allow its divine wind will rush through the stars, propelling all who are worthy along the path to salvation.

Hackett scoffed when he remembered that. This revelation made ONI and the alliance in whole going batshit crazy for mouths. With the former doing everything in its power to find out if this was true or not. It was however later revealed, much to everyone comfort, the Prophet somehow managed to collect the Installation 04's "index" or the digital storage device containing the access codes needed to activate the rings, which was useless as it was already confirmed that an Index cannot be used to activate any Halo besides the one it is found on and moreover, thanks to Cortana, the index now nothing but a very old piece of paperweight.

The ship also contained information about upcoming Covenant attack plans and their defense strategies which later proved invaluable for the alliance war efforts. Though none of the planned Covenant attacks had ever occurred, possibly due to their devastating ship losses in the battle of Sanghelios. And finally, the battle showed the UNSC how effective a Mass effect technology equipped ship can be in combat. In the battle, the Banshee alone destroyed or knocked out of 2_CCS_-class battlecruiser, 3_CAR_-class frigates, 1_CPV_-class destroyer and 1_SDV_-class heavy corvette while suffering minimal damage to itself. The Banshee also played a key role in disabling and capturing the Covenant flagship by achieving a direct hit on its shield generator while it was lunching Plasma torpedoes. An achievement that was to no small efforts of Captain Athena, who to this day claims was sheer luck. The UNSC HIGHCOM, highly impressed by Banshee's performance, suspended and later cancelled all of their build order for Supremacy-Class-Cruisers which was a heavily modified and upgraded version of the Marathon-class cruiser and ordered full production of Banshee-Cass-Heavy cruiser as the UNSC's future main warship.

August **15, 2556 ****-**** August ****1****5, 2561:** The alliance spent the next five years to prepare of an all-out offensive to liberate the Covenant occupied Mid & Outer colonies. In that time,

Humanity took a bizarre and somewhat crazy concept to rebuilt there war machine. Named the "Project phoenix" the plan was to review Humanity ancient arsenal of weapons that were simply phased out by time but did not lost their usefulness , and if seems feasible, put their modernized variants into service once again in order to save R&D and ultimately, production costs. This plan proposed by Captain Athena- B312 and backed by a number of admirals, was met with fierce resistance mainly from corporations, who had made many new designs to sell. Despite that, Lord Hood nevertheless authorized some demonstration and all of them prove successful. Production of weapons that were long buried inside the sands of time begun and then put onto service after nearly 5 century of their creations. Needless to say, this made the corporate giants very unhappy, particularly over Athena. During this time, a number of Covenant attack occurred, but all of the attack fleets consisted of small numbers of warships and had poor coordination with each other thus were repelled with relative ease. Also, a number of hit-and-run raids on Covenant shipyards and other military installations using the new Fury-Class Heavy Raiders which were basically heavily upgraded slipstream-capable shielded Longshowrds with an Mass-Effect core, plasma and antimatter weaponries and had limited stealth capability. Those raids heavily limited the Covenants ability to wage an offensive warfare.

Hackett smiled as he remembered those days, as he was one of those raider pilots. They were called "The Banshee raiders" or "Athena's raiders" mainly because of the fact that the banshee was their all-time mobile base of operation and Captain Athena was their commander and the key architect behind the idea of raids. The Covenant, brutes in particular, had never thought that a "coward" race like Human will dare to raid their shipyards, so they took very little to no preparation to protect their installations and shipyards from surprise Starfighter raids. His smiled widened as he remembered his first raid, their target was a Covenant shipyards above Arcadia which was contrary to popular belief, was only partially glassed and then a major Covenant colony with and a number of orbital shipyards. The reason it was chosen for the attack because it was building the replacement for the Indomitable Wrath. The attack was huge success, not only they managed to destroy the shipyard and the carrier with it, they also mangle to badly damage two more small shipyards, one _CAR_-class frigate and crack open one _CCS_-class battlecruiser into two pieces whose captain was too slow to put up his shields. In the entire engagement, their group of 12 fighters were engaged by only 6 Covenant Type-31 XMF, otherwise known as the _Seraph_-class Starfighter, and where easily taken out. That raid was also the first time he met with Anderson, who was assigned as his co-pilot/bombardier.

****Septembe****r**** 1****, 2561:**** The 2nd second Covenant war or Alliance-Covenant war as it was called by then, took a full swing as the alliance launched "Operation Overdrive", a massive offensive to liberate the middle colonies from Covenant occupation. The Covenant was taken completely by surprise as they were amusingly, never anticipated the Humans/ Separatists to attack in such large scale mostly thanks to Prophet of sanity's many "prophecies", which for the most part claimed that the Humanity and the Heretics will hide and cower in their planets, waiting the holy forces of the Covenant to purge them. Overdrive was a massive multi-front offensive, with the opening attacks mounted on no less than 1/3 of the entire Covenant defensive lines. The initial phase of the overdrive was completed

with huge success as the UNSC ships proved far superior to that of the Covenant in terms of long range gunnery and tactics, with Mass-effect enhanced MAC guns destroying many Covenant ships long before they even managed to get into their own optimal weapons range. All of the opening attacks were successfully completed in less than 3 months, with Alliance liberating a significant portion of the middle colonies. However, It didn't took long for the Covenant regroup and launch a series of powerful counterattacks on the newly liberated colonies and soon the entire offensive became a long and bloody stalemate.

****September **** 10, 2561:**** The ONI prowler Green Lake, while on a deep space scout mission makes arguably one of the greatest discoveries ever found by the Humanity, The Beta halo or Installation 01. Upon discovering the halo the ONI prowler immediately asked for reinforcement from the HIGHCOM. A small alliance task force, under the command of Arbiter Thel 'Vadam himself was sent to recover technology, historical information and if possible, the monitor of the Installation before destroying it. But as soon as they found the monitor of the installation, the 01-Repentant Observer, It informed them something much unexpectedâ€¦

The Installations main weapons have been long since disassembled and every last flood on the ring has been exterminated.

After some conversation the monitor revealed that it felt very guilty over the deaths of all the Forerunners, and swore to never allow such an occurrence happen again. Approximately 200 years after the firing, the installation's main weapon had been disassembled by Repentant Observers sentinels and all Flood spore on the ring were tuned to ash. The Beta Halo has now been transformed it into a true Eden filled with thousands of exotic animal life which the monitor gathered from the Halos installation's labs or re-created via cloning.

The task force, taken by complete surprise decided not to destroy the ring immediately and to relay this info to alliance HIGHCOM for immediate revaluation of the current objectives. The HIGHCOM, after a quite long and rather heated argument decided that since the ring is no longer a threat and like all Halo is a massive archive of knowledge the ring is to be quarantined by a small alliance fleet while a number of alliance scientists and an entire alliance marine division to be stationed in the ring. The scientists tusk would be to study the Forerunners archives while the marines will make double sure that no flood spore is left on the ring.

****December ****1, 2561:**** The alliance successfully managed to break the deadlock after launching a surprise attack on the Covenant's main stronghold of the middle colony's, planet Reach. While the planet itself was glassed by the Covenant during the Human-Covenant war, the systems recourse-rich asteroids and its position among the stars still allowed it to hold a high strategic importance. The attack was led by the newly promoted Vice-admiral Athena- B312, who by that time became as famous in the UNSC as Vice-admiral Preston J. Colewas during the HCW. Her battle plan was quite simple, but extremely effective. Her plan of attack was divided into 3 phases. The phases were:

****Phase1: **** A group of 12 Fury fighters will jump into Reach's High-atmosphere and will initiate a surprise attack on Covenant

installations and shipyards. However their attack will be deliberately disorganized and slow enough for the Covenant to successfully intercept and engage them. The fighters will continue to attack Covenant installations until the Covenant managed to shoot down at least 8 of the Fury's of which all but two were actually manned by organic pilots. The rest of the fighters were manned by "Smart AI"s that would upload themselves to one of the manned fighters or if possible, nearby Covenant computers as soon their fighters get destroyed. As soon as the Covenant manages to shot down 8 or more so fighters the remaining raiders will pretend to panic and instead of using the standard protocol of Disengage-Cloak-Jump, they would just jump into the rendezvous point where the Banshee alone will wait for the perusing fleet. As soon as the Covenant would recognize the Banshee, they would naturally send a large portion of their ships to destroy the ship which was a thorn in their side from the start of the war once and for all.

****Phase2: **** As soon as the Covenant sends a significant numbers of their ships to capture or destroy the Banshee, the main invasion fleet will attack Reach; the AI's whose successfully manages to infiltrate the Covenant defense network will wreak havoc on the remaining Covenant warships and defense platforms, allowing the invasion fleet to achieve a quick and decisive victory.

****Phase3: ****As soon as the invasion fleet destroys a significant portion of the remaining Reach's PDF, a large portion of the fleet would rendezvous with the Banshee and would systematically exterminate the pursuing Covenant warships.

While the first two phases were successfully completed the third phase went horribly wrong as the alliance invasion fleet which was under the command of Admiral Bill MacMillan, later reveled to be under a direct order from the UEG, held its position over Reach instead of going to aid the Banshee. Although the Banshee manages to survive by using the same method Cole used eighteen years ago, firing her entire complement of nuclear warheads inside a nearby gas giant's atmosphere, igniting the super-pressurized hydrogen and escape using a blind emergency slipspace jump just before the gas giant turned into a exploding star. The blind jump, combined with a damaged slipspace drive, forced the Banshee to stay in slipspace nearly for an entire year and in that time, a lot of galaxy shaking events started to take place.

****December ****12, 2561:**** The UNSC Banshee was declared MIA by the UNSC and Vice-admiral Athena was posthumously Skip-promoted to a Fleet Admiral by Lord Terrence Hood. Though the breaching of protocol was mostly symbolic and was mainly done for propaganda and moral boosting purpose, made her the only Fleet Admiral aside from Fleet Admiral Harpar and second highest decorated ranking officer of the UNSC.

****December 2****1, 2561: ****The scientists on the Installation 01, both Human and separatist, discovered more and more data that disproved the Covenant religion, which was still practiced by majority of the separatist races. While fortunately majority of the separatist races accepted that fact and Sangheili scholars resurrected a dead religion from before the time of the Covenant, leading to the separatist worshipping a deity known as Kir'la, some separatist, mostly Sangheilis, refused and accused the humans of spreading lies about the great journey. This again intensified the

slowly dissolving tension between the separatist and the UNSC.

****January ****10, 2562: ****Lord Hood was assassinated by unknown assailants with evidence (Later proved to be forged) pointed on Admiral Harpar and a number of high ranking UNSC officer that were next in line of succession. The sudden chaos allowed the UEG to take over. The UEG was quick to arrest and detain all of the suspected officers which followed with the execution of Admiral Harpar. The UEG went on to promote and appoint Admiral Bill MacMillan as the commander of the UNSC who was played a key role in the arrests. The removal of the Admirals and his role on the liberation of Reach and the added color on it by the propaganda machine meant his appointment didn't face virtually any opposition.

****January ****10, 2562-February 15, 2563: ****2562-2663 was one of the most disastrous times for the Orion alliance. UEG and their puppet Admiral Bill MacMillan, took multiple decisions that badly hampered the entire war effort and almost ended the Human Separatist alliance. Three of the most disastrous of those decisions were:

****The skirmish over Beta** **Halo: ****With the religion followers getting more violent about their opinion, the tension between the UNSC and the separatist continues to be intensified. The situation reached its climax when a certain part of the old religion follower calling themselves the Strom Covenant found out about the Beta Halo and decided to activate it in order to start the great journey. While the Halos main weapons is been disabled long ago, the Strom Covenant either wasn't aware of it or simply refused to believe it. On February 15, 2562 a fleet under the rouge Fleetmaster Ioka 'Ghadhamee assaulted the Joint UNSC / Separatist Fleet guarding the Beta Halo. Although their Fleet was successfully repelled by the combined Fleet, UEG went ballistic and via MacMillan, declared that the separatist can no longer be trusted, and the Halo should be guarded and controlled by the UNSC alone. This led to a diplomatic crisis and a skirmish between the separatist ships and the UNSC squadron that were sent to take over the Halo. Fortunately, the UNSC ships that were assigned to the HDF stayed neutral during the engagement which resulted the numerically inferior squadron quickly stand down. The crisis was later resolved, the incident badly damaged the growing Human- separatist relationship and in particular, MacMillans and UEG influence over UNSC.

****The attempt to discredit the Spartans:****After the "death" of Admiral Athena- B312, there was no active Spartan. After the Spartan IV program was proved 100%safe, the augmentation process became standard for all ODST which eliminated the need of Spartans. Sometime after the Prime Halo incident, a number of meant-to-be-secret-for-good information regarding the Spartan projects was intentionally leaked by the ONI due to the order of the UEG senate. Certain members of the UEG along with the head of ONI Admiral Serin Osman, for entirely personal reason, wanted to discredit the Spartans and Athena-C625 in particular. While the initial response was as the UEG and Osman desired, the UEG pushed it too far and the plan eventually backfired. Both among Humans and separatist the military and civilians were outraged by this attempt and their support for the UEG was greatly reduced. Furthermore, this even created a division inside the ONI with many begun to discretely begun to question Osman's leadership skills.

****The Flood outbreak on Kobol:**** Sometimes after the start of the operation overdrive, the ONI found a number of flood infection forms on a derelict covenant ship. Instead of destroying the forms, the ONI decided to quarantine the ship and study as much as they can about the Flood without risking an outbreak in order to create better defense against the flood. The UEG however, had other plans. As soon it became clear that a slight genetic augmentation allows the humans to become immune to flood infection forms, a number of the senators started to entertain themselves by thinking about weaponizing the Flood to use it against the "enemies of Humanity ", which basically meant every other alien species . However in order to even start research about something of that scale, they either had to build a research station near the ship or take the infection forms to a research station and to UEG, the latter was more economical, therefore better. The UEG, despite very strong protest from a number of ONI officials, had the forms moved to Kobol, an inner colony planet with no less than 3.2 million inhabitant. The eventual outbreak happened almost 5 days after the arrival of the forms and resulted a death toll of 12.6 million and two entire continent of the planet were completely destroyed. Only ONI's extensive preparation for an outbreak spared the entire planet from being purge. A number of top ONI officials called for Osman's resignation because of her approval of the project who were quickly subdued by her, further expanding the division.

The Flood outbreak was the last nail in the UEGs coffin. The separatist were so angry at the UEG that they declare the alliance to defunct and moved all their forces to their home territory. Furthermore, both UNSC and the ONI became powder cages of mutiny, with waiting for a single spark to blow.

****February 16, 2563-February 20, 2563:**** The UNSC Banshee, after spending one year in the slipspace, finally came back to the reality near the planet Sigma Octanus IV in the Sigma Octanus system. They were immediately intercepted by the local defense fleet which was more than happy to see the Banshee and its commander in one piece. After Athena was informed about the current situation, it wasn't difficult for her understand that the UEG is behind of all this. However, while she knew that she will probably have active support from both that UNSC and the separatist due to her current rank and political situation, she needed some hard proof to turn the civilian population to her side, a necessity avoid a full-scale civil war. Fortunately for her, one of the ships in the defense fleet contained a well-ranked ONI officer who informed the commander about the location of the ONI main space station and also gave her the codes needed to bypass its defenses. Athena, ordered her ship to be rapidly rearmed and repaired and requisitioned an extra batch of marines and the ONI officer to be transferred onto her ship. After both was completed the Banshee jumped to the HQ, bypass it defenses, and boarded the base. The main objective of Banshee was to either capture or kill Admiral Serin Osman and collect evidence against the UEG. While the initial resistance was fierce, the entire operation went better than expected due to the fact the many of the ONI operative actually stand downed as soon as they became aware who was leading the operation. The last stand of the Admiral Osman however, was a very heroic one and the marine assault suffered heavy losses while trying to take her and her personal bodyguards down .After neutralizing Admiral Margaret and accessing ONI database, Athena had all the proofs she needed to take down the UEG.

However, inside the database, she also discovered an ONI/UEG backed Storm Covenant assassination plan which targets were Arbiter Thel 'Vadam and Fleetmaster Rtas 'Vadum. Apparently, the UEG was planning to assist the Storm Covenant to assassinate Arbiter Thel 'Vadam and Fleetmaster Rtas 'Vadum and then replacing them by leaders who will favor the UEG more thus reestablishing the alliance. The Storm Covenant operatives involved in this plan were to be swiftly wiped out by ONI as soon as the assassination was carried away.

Hackett let out a small smirk as he is one of the few people who knows that Athena found this to be a perfect opportunity to cement separatists support for her coup, a fact that is still to this day is classified to everyone expect High ranking persons like Hackett. She decided to utilize an ONI stealth prowler to infiltrate Sanghelios alone and stop the assassination on the spot. The plan went flawlessly and she managed to kill both assassins right when they were about to strike on their targets. Both the Arbiter Thel 'Vadam and Fleetmaster Rtas 'Vadum immediately recognized Athena and was both surprised and delighted to see her. After she consulted with them and told them about the UEG involvement in this plan the result was exactly as she expected, both of them were outraged and promised her full military and political support in her effort to overthrow UEG since they technically already violated the Orion treaty.

With her alliance with the separatists secured Admiral Athena lunched what is known to this day as "Terran revolution" a full scale coup d'État against the UEG. The revolution, was executed like this:

****Stage 1: **** Forces loyal to Athena started broadcasting a transmission on all UNSC and Civilian channel which contained proof about the UEG conspiracies against UNSC (Dubbed crimes against Humanity. Which was to an extent, was accurate), about the fact that she is still alive and a call to join her cause to remove the corrupted UEG senate from power. Due to the fact that she is already neutralized the ONI Athena knew that there is little UEG can do to stop the transmission.

****Stage 2: **** In the ensuing Chaos and confusion, a combined Separatists/UNSC task force led by the banshee will launch a surprise attack on Earth and will capture the UEG senate before they can escape.

****Stage 3: **** Athena will declare the UEG to be disbanded and will again reestablish martial law for an indefinite time.

While the entire plan went almost as Athena predicted, there was a small unforeseen turn of event, Admiral Bill MacMillan, who was still loyal to the UEG and decided to make a last stand against Athena's task force in order to buy some senator some time to escape. While his small flotilla was eventually destroyed (Majority of the Sol defense ship were either suffering from internal mutiny or defected to Athena's faction), it indeed allowed some senators and key leader of the UEG to escape capture. They will later create a paramilitary Pro-Human survivalist group named Cerberus, dedicated to restore the UEG and turn humanity the most dominant race in the galaxy.

Nevertheless, as soon as Flagship of Fleet admiral Bill MacMillan, the UNSC Arrow, was destroyed all the UNSC forces in the Sol system

surrendered and acknowledged Athena as the new supreme commander of the UNSC .In the next two weeks all Human civilian and military assets either acknowledged Athena's rule or was taken over by forces loyal to her.

Athena, now the de-facto ruler of all Humanity, Understood very well if she does not introduce even the most limited form of democracy in her new order, she will soon lose the support of the civilian and which will lead to a civil war. In order to avoid such conflict, she introduced the Terran intern council or the TIC , the predecessor of the Imperial council. It was dedicated to handle the day to day affairs and manage the civilian portion of the government.

****March 25, 2563-February 20, 2569:****With political stability and secured alliance, the UNSC continued to secure its middle colonies, which was done by 2565. After that the alliance, spend the next four years on the defensive, improving logistics and fleet capacity. During this time, frequent raids in the covenant territory were ever present along with small to large fleet skirmishes.

While the alliance was busy preparing for another offensive, the covenant was suffering from internal conflicts. The kig-yeer found it more and more economically non-beneficial to fight for the covenant as their trade convoys were constantly devastated by UNSC raids, many Yanme'e queens started to get worried and frustrated by the new "Prophet of sanity's "lack of mental stability, though it would be accurate to call him downright crazy, his disrespect to Yanme'e and Jiralhanae's using their warriors as cannon fodder and literally working their workers to death. And finally, some Jiralhanae, Contrary to their nature, started to wonder if it is possible to rebuild their civilization into a peaceful one on which they can live with harmony with other species a result of their long-time exposure to the concept of a united civilization and its benefits. All in all, these events caused enough political disturbances among the covenant that they were unable to prepare for any major counter offensive for the next five years. Those however, didn't stop them from building up strong defensive fortification for an inevitable Alliance attack.

****February 28, 2569:**** Alliance knew that they cannot secure a decisive victory against the covenant using conventional methods as their fleets still outnumber them in a 3:1 ratio. In light of this, the Alliance launched "Operation Hurtlocker" later became known as the massacre on Beta Halo, a plan that successfully wiped out 3-4th of the entire covenant fleet. It was a simple but decisive operation that was executed like this:

****Phase 1: **** The Alliance will "accidentally" leak the information about Installation 01 via a moderately secured message that they know will be intercepted by covenant and will pretend that they have just found it.

****Phase 2: **** As soon as the covenant fleet would launch their assault on the Installation, the orbiting "exploration fleet" will put up a token resistance and fled the ring, allowing the covenant to take complete orbital control of the "Unexplored" halo ring which is now contains nothing but an army of sentinels programmed to specifically fight the covenant units.

****Phase 3: **** while the covenant will attempt to acquire the Index, a

number of small raids will be conducted by the alliance as a guise of force recon. Forcing the covenant to bring in even more ships to reinforce their position.

****Phase 4:**** As soon as the covenant acquires the Index, a fleet of alliance warships will briefly engage the Prophet of sanity's flagship and then bug out, allowing the Prophet to decent to the ring and activate the Index . Although a proper Index would need a human to activate, this Index was intentionally tampered to be activated by the Prophet of sanity's to use it, as he claimed some time ago that "He was blessed by forerunners for this rightful duty and now he is the only one who can activate the sacred rings" .

****Phase 5:**** As soon he would activate the Index, all of the rings power generators would simultaneously self-destruct, creating a supernova large enough to obliterate the entire star system and the entire covenant fleet with it.

The plan was executed flawlessly and the alliance didn't suffered a single causality while the covenant losses' numbered in billions. It was the final decisive victory for the alliance and the last nail in the coffin for the covenant as they lost their entire remaining San 'Shyuum councilors, all but two of their supercapitals, most of their capitals and capable ship masters with them. It also convinced Kig-yar and Yanme'e to break away from covenant and seek peace with the alliance.

****March 12, 2569:**** A single covenant CCS-class battlecruiser carrying the diplomats from Kig-yar and the Yanme'e entered alliance occupied Epsilon Eridani System and started negotiation. The terms and conditions were given to the Kig-yar and Yanme'e for a peace treaty involved;

Both species must join and remain member of the Orion Alliance and its successor governments for the next 80 years.

Unless given permission to expand, both species must limit their navy to 250 capital ships and 4000 strikes crafts and all new ships must weight under 120,000 tons. However, additional two ships can be built with the maximum tonnage of 320,000 to serve as flagships.

Unless given permission to expand, both species must limit their army to 2.5 million people strong and cannot utilize any equipment that weight over 80 metric tons.

For the next 50 years, both species government must give 20% of their annual income to UNSC as reparation for the damage caused by them in the Human-covenant war. However, both species can petition for a year delay if need arise.

For the next 60 years, both species must limit their new colonization efforts to 150 planets. However, if a planet with significant value can be found after the limit is reached, both species can petition for it to be claimed by the Alliance. In return for that, they will be given a hefty finder fee and 30% of the planets landmasses of their choices.

Both side accepted the treaty and with it a separatist fleet went in and secured their borders, effectively putting both species out of the war.

****March 30, 2569:**** The UNSC launched "Operation Downfall" a full scale assault on every remaining covenant territory including Oth Sonin III, the home system of the Jiralhanae. The separatist fleet played a small role in the entire operation as they were mostly busy with the occupation of Kig-yar and the Yanme's with an element of their forces only participated in the ground assault of Doisac. Needless to say they were faced with fanatical resistance in the entire operation.

****May 25, 2569:**** The last of the covenant territory was secured and the last of the resisting forces on the Doisac was eliminated. With that the Alliance-Covenant war was finally over. The remaining Jiralhanae's were "Interned" or to be more accurate, subjected by the UNSC.

****May 28, 2569: ****This date will forever be remembered in the history of the Humanity as the Alliance-Covenant war officially declared over and the UN was officially re-organized as the Terran Empire.

The declaration of the Empire was addressed to the Terran intern council and then to the general populace by Lord/Lady Admiral Athena-B312. In her long speech, she mainly said that Humanity has entered a new age of rapid growth and expansion, and in order to keep the Humanity united under a single banner in these unstable times, strong leadership is necessary. And she will provide that leadership with the promise to make Humanity one of the most powerful and influential galactic powers ever to be known. Due to her popularity and influence in the UN as a whole, transition was completed relatively peacefully, with only a few riots occurring in the earth and elsewhere, all of which were quickly quelled.

****May 28, 2569-May 28, 2599:**** For the next twenty years, humanity started to expand and prosper rapidly, recovering most of their losses in only twenty years. It was achieved by utilizing technologies recovered from Beta Halo. Empress Athena, true to her words, spread Humanity's power and influences over other species to rival that of the Sangheili. This started a rather friendly "cold war" among them that resulted in massive expansion of their both military and civilian assets. By the end of May, 99, both sides' fleet strength reached nearly one and half thousand battle ready ships of various types with a thousand more in reserve. The Empire successfully established 9 more new colonies while the Sangheili and other species established only 3.

****May 29, 2589:**** The Empire and The Sangheili Federation launched "Project Pathfinder" a scientific/military exploration to Installation 00 also known as "The Ark". The fleet that was tasked with this project was surprised to find out that the Installation does not only have been cleansed from flood infestations but it is now somehow fully repaired itself. After landing on the ark they met with 16807 Errant Crucible, the actual monitor of the Installation. It informed them that he was deactivated by the 05-032 Mendicant Bias when the first time the "Reclaimers" visited the Ark and by therefore unable to provide assistance. With the help of the Crucible, the exploration team successfully accessed Ark's computer core and was disappointed to find out that the explosion had destroyed nearly everything that was contained there. What was left however was still vast and would take decades to examine. When the news of their founding was reported to the Imperial council, a debate

sparked about what to do with the Ark. It was ultimately decided that the Ark for the time being, be inhabited by a small group of scientist along with a sizable security detail and be guarded by a small flotilla of warships.

****May 29, 2590:**** After a year worth of research and examinations the scientific team on the Ark successfully managed to catalog 2% of the surviving data stored on the cores. At the same time it was discovered that the gargantuan portal that enables access to the Ark was damaged during the battle of Installation 00 and will soon become too unstable to utilize, and has to be shut down. A plan was formed to transport the entire Ark using its recently discovered slipspace drives to transport it to another destination. The journey was started on May 29 and was expected to be completed in one year.

****May 30, 2591:**** Exactly one year one day after the start of the journey, the Ark's completed its voyage and reached its destination. Its new resting place, named "Serenity Nebula" because of its beautiful, almost sky-like blue gas clouds, is in-between of all seven of the alliance member recesses, therefore giving easy access to all of them. That fact encouraged all of the alliance members to consider utilizing the Ark as a hub for commerce and culture for all the member races. Six of the eight "arm" of the Ark was given to the member races to be built upon and the other two arms were left empty to accommodate any future species at far future.

****June 25, 2591:**** The Installation 00 was also moved over the ark and was turned into the headquarters of Alliance military. Construction of a huge museum on it followed, containing detailed history of every Alliance race and a large portion of it was dedicated to the two Great wars. After nearly 66 years of constant fighting, all the surviving races focused on building a new, relatively peaceful future.

****June 25, 2591-December 14, 2625:**** In the next 29 years, the members of the Alliance progressed rapidly. Humanity was however, held the lead in this undeclared race. Their military strength surpassed that of the Sangheili, their economy began to challenge that of the Kig-yars. By 2520, Humanity has fully rebuilt their ravaged colonies and terraformed many of those that were burned to glass. However, the cost of fully terraforming Reach was deemed too high as it was one of few planets that were truly glassed to later. A decision was made to turn the planet into an Ecumenopolis, a gigantic city that covered the whole surface of the planet. A few places were rebuilt however, the entire CASTLE Base and its surroundings were recreated to the smallest detail and became and was turned into a memorial for Spartans. It also remained active as the training academy of N7 recruits, an elite group of soldiers whose recruits were the best and brightest of the Imperial military. Reconstruction of Reach was completed by 2015 and within a month the Imperial military moved its headquarters from Earth to Reach. Meanwhile, Humanity began to "uplift" the Jiralhanae. This involved redesigning the Jiralhanae's savage warrior culture into an honor based one. The concept of brotherhood was implemented on the place of direct rivalry. The concept of Global Nationalism replaced the clan system. All in all, the "reformed" Jiralhanae culture resembled that of the ancient earth Samurai and to an extent that of the Sangheili. A fact that was received by Sangheili with mixed response. Nevertheless, the near systematic termination of all the mature

Jiralhanae during the war meant the uplifting process went smoothly without any incident and by 2623, Doisac was fully rebuilt under the banner of Jiralhanae union, and laid the keel of their first colony ships on their newly built orbital shipyards.

The end of 2625 also saw the dissolution of the Orion alliance which was succeeded by the Orion Confederacy. The Confederacy provided all of the member species with much more freedom than the Federation styled alliance hence allowing each member to work with their issues more independently and quickly. The Ark became the seat of government of the Confederacy while the Beta Halo became the headquarters of the Confederate Navy.

****March 25, 2645:**** The Humanity reached the peak of its power. With over 800 colonies and a military that is the biggest of the entire Confederacy, the Empire seemed all but invincible. But with no immediate threat, old problem begun to reemerges. Some of the outer colonies once again started making demand for independence from the Empire. While initially the protests were peaceful, nearly 50 colonies under the banner of system alliance soon begun an armed struggle against federation.

****June 30, 2645-March 2646:**** While initially the empire had the upper hand, soon 20 more colonies joined the System alliance and the war escalated. After nearly a year of sporadic conflicts between both forces The Empress decided that to open negotiations. She offered to recognize the System alliance as an autonomous state within the empire with a seat to represent them in the Imperial senate. She would also allow them to keep a small armed forces and allow them to independently trade with other Confederate member. While many were surprised and protested against this move, Athena knew this was the only way she can avoid a full scale civil war. As all the Confederate members refused to acknowledge the Alliance as a sovereign power with nations like the Sangheili Federation and Unggogy Consortium has declared that they will provide full support if the Empire decides to crush the Alliance meant the Alliance was had no other choice but to accept the proposition. However, when the delegation from the both side arrived to sign the treaty in on board the Sangheili Supercarrier Renewed journey, ships that were carrying the dignitaries from the both were suddenly fired upon by the lead ship of the Alliance escort. Both ships had their shields powered down as a sign of good faith and thus was immediately destroyed. The ship then immediately entered Slipspace leavening all sides stunned and unsure about what just happened. The attack killed nearly all the key leaders of the alliance and a number of prominent senators of the Imperial senate. Empress Athena was fortunately already on board the Supercarrier to talk with the Arbiter hence managed to survive the tragic event. The attack was later revealed to be committed by a splinter group in the Alliance who opposed the treaty and declared that they will fight on till the Empire recognized the Alliance as a sovereign nation. Unfortunately for them, only them handful of planets sided with them and the remaining Alliance leadership launched a joint operation with the Empire to eliminate this rebel faction. When this was done, the treaty was a singed and peace was restored. In the end though, the brief but bloody civil war all but devastated the very concept the Alliance was formed and its lost of nearly all of key leading figures meant it will take Alliance decades to restore themselves into their pre-war status and nearly a century more to actually growing into a noticeable faction.

****February 4, 2656:**** Nearly a decade after the war, the Alliance and Empire decided to create a joint colony in an effort to improve relation. The colony was renamed Eden Prime and the colony soon became to prosper. This led to improving relation with Alliance and Empire but it didn't stopped the Alliance for pursuing their reemerged urge for independence.

****December 19, 2661:**** The Empire slowly started to begun mobilizing its military. More and more ships began to be pulled out of the mothball and refitted under the guise of "Maintenance Check". "The Empress is up to something and so far, he has no idea what that is. Can't be war, situation with the Alliance is nowhere the bad to even consider such option_â€|"

"Sir, all crews are aboard and we are ready for departure." The soft yet solid voice of Sharon, the ships A.I. pulled Hackett back to reality.

Hackett let out small breath and thought to himself, "Well, I will know eventually," and straighten him on the chair. He noticed that Anderson has already taken his seat on the first officer chair and waiting for his order.

"Take us out, ensign." Hackett gave the order to the young blond women at helm.

"Yes sir." With the reply, the young officer became busy with steering out the 12 kilometer long vessel from the gigantic bay. The process isn't easy as one single mistake may lead to the monstrous vessel crashing through the docks wall. Nevertheless, she skillfully moved the giant ship from the Shipyard and begun moving the vessel away from it at one quarter speed.

"Feels good to be flying again, isn't it sir?" Anderson asked with a small smile on his face.

"It sure dose." Hackett replied Small smile of his own. He then tuned to the crew and ordered Spin up the Slipspace Drive and set course for Pluto.

"Course laid in, Slipspace drive is standing by." Anderson reported.

Hackett let out a small smile, "Engage" he ordered.

A big, pitch black hole started to form in front of the ship, with the ship slowly begun to enter in it. As soon as the ship was completely consumed the entire ship, the hole collapsed and the ITSS Reach, flagship of the 5th Imperial fleet disappeared from real time space.

****Act 2: Improvised measure ****

****January/11/2662****

****Milky Way/Minos Wasteland/ Caestus system****

****Near planet Temerarus****

****Onboard the UNSC Forward Unto Dawn.****

"Well that went well." Cortana commented while staring at the corpse of the dead aliens.

"How many more of them are onboard?" Chief asked.

"Well according to that poor guy's Omni-tool, you just wiped out Team Alpha and Team Bravo, congratulations." The sarcasm was all too obvious on Cortana's voice. "That leaves Team Omega and the four other guy is guarding the shuttle plus the pilot makes a grand total of nine. They landed on what remains of the cargo bay 9."

"Got it." Chief replied as he began walking toward cargo bay 9.

"And exactly what is your plan?" Cortana asked. Someone has to be completely deaf to miss the annoyed tone in her voice.

"Kill them. Grab the shuttle. Get to the nearest UNSC outpost." Chief's reply was short and straight to the point.

"Chief I have absolutely no idea where the hell we are, I don't even know if we are in the Milky Way!" The heat of Cortana's frustration was no less volatile than that of a plasma discharge. "For all we know we are in another galaxy! And one shuttle isn't going to take us far! We need a ship! And the Dawn will never fly again!"

"What about their ship? How big it is? How many crews?" Chief asked. It's a bold idea but it's the only one on the table.

"It's supposedly a decommissioned Turian frigate but that thing is smaller than most UNSC corvettes." Cortana still had frustration on her voice but seriousness started to take over. "Anyway the Bataraians bought it as scrap metal and refitted it. It's fast, agile and is supposed to be armed to the teeth for a ship of its size. Standard complement is supposed to be 120 crewmembers but the current captain, Nola, never maintains a crew bigger than 80. Trust issues. Anyway they recently had a fight with the Turian authorities and the current crew complement is less than 42 and nearly all of them are pissed at the captain."

"That won't be too much trouble to handle, given their weapons and tactics." Chief said.

"They won't but getting on board is the difficult part. Cortana replied. "Unless the ship's first mate, Gadhra tells everything is ok they won't let the shuttle dock. On the contrary, they'll turn the shuttle into space dust."

"Did I?" Chief didn't bother to finish the sentence.

"No. He's at the shuttle. Don't think about using him as a hostage as the guy is good and..." Cortana tailed off. "Chief I have an idea. Her voice suddenly spiked with excitement. It's crazy but it just might work."

"Let's hear it." Chief said.

2 minutes later

"You sure you aren't losing it?"

****Act 3: Identity Nuke ****

****January/11/2662****

****Milky Way/Minos Wasteland/ Caestus system****

****Near planet Temerarus****

****Onboard the UNSC Forward Unto Dawn.****

****Cargo Bay 9****

Gadha is feeling nervous. There is no sign of Alpha or Bravo team. Neither is reported in and neither is responding in coms. _"Something's not right,"_ he thought. _"But what?"_

Suddenly, one of his squad member cried out in something that can be only described as total panic. Quickly turning to the entrance to the room, he saw something that for a moment literally froze every muscle in his body. A 7 feet long figure, encased in a dark green armor that is clearly showing signs of battle with a white alien marking on its chest. The helmet has an orange visor that reflects no sign of life. After that agonizing moment has passed, Gadha quickly pulled out his MK-VII Terminator Assault Rifle and aimed at the terrifying figure. Other follows suit but before any of them could fire a shot the figure quickly put its hand up in the air.

"Don't shoot!" A female voice came out of the helmet. "I want to talk!"

Gadhas thumbs around the grip stiffened. "Whoâ€|WHAT are you?" He shouted.

The reply he got is short, "Cortana Hal'sy. Special tactics and reconnaissance."

****Codex Entry (Humans â€"Military- Terran Imperial Fleets): ****The Imperial Navy****

After their near-extinction during the Human-covenant-war the Humanity of earth vowed to never to be threatened with such fate again. In order to defend themselves from such satiation, the Humanity needed a large fleet hence was the birth of the Imperial Navy.

The Imperial Navy is massive organization divided into three Fleet branches. Each of them is independent of the other and has separate Command authority. Although in wartime situation, all of the branches are commanded by a single HIGHCOM.

****Imperial Border Security Fleet:****

The eyes and whips of the empire. The IBSF is responsible for patrolling the Imperial border and policing Imperial territories. They utilize a large number of fighter, frigates and, a few light and heavy cruiser and a single Battleship as their flagship, the ITWS Pegasus.

****Imperial planetary defense fleet:****

The shield of the empire. The IPDF is responsible for the defense of Imperial planets and installations through the empire. They utilize a large number of Orbital Defense Platform and defensive structure, a considerable number of warships of every classification, and a single Dreadnought as their flagship, the ITCS Preston .

****Imperial Armada:****

The hammer of the empire. The Armada is actually a combination of 6 standing fleets of all which is geared for offensive. Each fleet is consists of 350 warship of various sizes and are completely self-sufficient with their own support ships. And finally, each fleet utilizes a single Dreadnought as their flagship.

****Codex Entry (Humans "Military- Terran Imperial Fleet):
Banshee-Class-Heavy cruiser****

****Profile: (**http)(:/ /)(media).(moddb).com(/)
images/members/1/580/579031/Halo(_)(Cl).(png) (Remove the brackets
and spaces)**

****Length: 2272 meters.****

****Height: 226 meters****

****Weight: 376 meters.****

****Displacement: 3,09,523 tonnes. ****

****Aviation facilities: 4 two stories Hanger
facilities.****

****Armaments: Block 1, ACW Era:
>12x 234 inch Mark 8 mod 3 Gauss cannon in dual turret
mount.**

****72x 78 inch Mark 6 mod 2 Gauss cannon in dual turret
mount.****

****16x 39 inch Mark 4 mod 1 rail cannon in dual barbette
mount.****

****16x ****Archer ****Missile**** pad (400 missiles per pad).****

****8x Harpoon disruptor torpedo pad (160 missiles per pad)****

****6x Nova torpedo launcher. ****
>2x 312 inch Hull mounted Magnetic accelerator
cannons.**

****Block 2 Imperial Era:****

****12x 234 inch Mark 8 mod 6 Gauss/Plasma cannon in dual turret
mount.****

****72x 78 inch Mark 10 mod 1 Gauss/Palsma cannon in dual turret
mount.****

****16x 39 inch Mark 6 mod 2 rail cannon in dual barbette**

mount.**

16x **Javelin ****Missile**** pad (400 missiles per pad).**

8x Rapier disruptor torpedo pad (160 missiles per pad)

6x SuperNova torpedo launcher. **

>2x 312 inch Hull mounted Magnetic accelerator

cannons.

Defenses: Block 1, ACW Era:

32x "Fort" Class **fortified defense complex (Each complex consisting of 3x or 4x 50mm**** dual chemical reaction****Point-defense guns in dual turret mount, 3x or 4x Dual pulse laser turret, 600 Agent V missile in four missile pods****)**

Energy shielding.

Kinetic barriers**. **

Block 2 Imperial Era:

32x "Bastion" Class **fortified defense complex (Each complex consisting of 3x or 4x 50mm quad**** Gauss****Point-defense guns in dual turret mount, 3x or 4x quad Pulse laser turret, 600 Agent VII missile in four missile pods****)**

Energy shielding.

Kinetic barriers**. **

**Crew: 800 (5 If operated by an A.I.) **

2200 Marine & ODST.

**Complement: Block 1, ACW Era **

Air /Space:

4x **YSS-1000 Sabre-Class ****Starfighter squadron (8 Fighter per squadron)**

Or

4x YSS-1300A Firefox-class Starfighter squadron (8 Fighter per squadron)

2x GA-TL1B Longsword-class Bomber/Heavy Interceptor squadron (6 Fighter per squadron).

Or

2x GA-TL1A Backfire-class Bomber/Heavy Interceptor squadron (4 Fighter per squadron).

160x Dropship 77 Heavy-Troop Carrier/Infantry/Shielded "Pelican" calss dropship.

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**6x AV-20S Attack VTOL** "***Sparrowhawk II**" **Class
Gunship.**

**Or**

**6 AV-308A ****Attack VTOL** "***Shark**" **Class
Gunship.**

**2x**_** AC-230S**_** "Vulture II"**** Class
**_**Gunship.**_

**OR**

**6x**** ACV-224A**** "Hind "**** Class ****Gunship.**

**2xHAV-10 "Pod" Class Firebase dropship.**

**Ground:**

**12x ****M903 "Tagil" class Main Battle
Tank****.**

**Or**

**18x**** M809G "Scorpion" class Main Battle Tank**** (Gauss
****Scorpion****).**

**5x ****M-150D Mobile Artillery Assault Platform (MAAP)
****(****Rhino II****).**

**Or**

**5x ****M-155C Mobile Artillery Assault Platform/Tank (MAAP/T)
****(****Hammer Tank****).**

**8x ****M-130A "Coalition"****Mobile Artillery System.**

**10x ****M12R Light Reconnaissance Vehicle
(Warthog).**

**Or**

**M13R Light Reconnaissance Vehicle (Puma)****. **

**10x M12G1**** Light Anti-Armor Vehicle (Gauss
'Hog).**

**Or**

**10xM13AT Anti-Armor support Vehicle (Gauss Puma)****. **

**5x ****M12R Light Anti-Armor Vehicle (Rocket
'Hog).**

**Or**

**10xM13AA SPAAG system (Cannon Puma)****. **

**5x ****M831 Troop Transport****. **

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**Or**

**5x M843 Armored Personal carrier. **

**10x ****M274 Ultra-Light All-Terrain Vehicle/Armed (Gun
Mongoose).**

**12x ****M304 Combat ****exoskeleton**** (Cyclops II) **

**1x Pre-fabricated ****Firebase**.

**Block 2 Imperial Era:**

**Air /Space:**

**4x YSS-1300C Firefox-class Starfighter squadron (8 Fighter per
squadron)**

**2x GA-TL1B Backfire-class Bomber/Heavy Interceptor squadron (4
Fighter per squadron).**

**12x Dropship 80 Heavy-Troop Carrier/Infantry/Shielded "Pelican"
calss dropship.**

**6 AV-308A ****Attack VTOL** "***Shark**" **Class
Gunship.**

**6x**** ACV-224A**** "Hind "**** Class ****Gunship.**

**1x**_** AC-260S**_** "Pandora"**** Class aerospace**_**
Gunship.**_

**2xHAV-30 "Hog" Class Firebase dropship.**

**Ground:**

**12x ****M903M "Tiger" class Main Battle Tank****.**

**5x ****M-107H Mobile Artillery Assault Platform/Tank (MAAP/T)
****(****Hammer Tank****).**

**10x ****M13H Light Reconnaissance Vehicle (Puma)****. **

**10x M13ATM**** Anti-Armor support Vehicle (Plasma Puma).**

**5x ****M14AAM SPAAG Vehicle (Blazer Puma).**

**5x M843M Armored Personal carrier.**

**10x ****M280H Ultra-Light All-Terrain Vehicle/Armed
(Spooky).**

**12x ****M408 Combat ****exoskeleton (Berserker)**

**1x Pre-fabricated ****Firebase**.

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When I first saw the Banshee, I laughed at its crude and rugged shape. Now, it's became a tradition for our young shipsmasters to visit that ships for good omen.

__**- Fleetmaster**__** Rtas 'Vadum.**_

The Banshee-Cass**-**Heavy cruiser was a revolutionary design in many aspects. It was the first UNSC ship in century to feature guns as primary weapons. The Banshee was armed to the teeth and had enough armor to take on beating from two CCS-class battlecruiser together. The ship was highly modular and its modules were so standardized that they were interchangeable with any ships of the same class. This meant that any shipyard than can made anything the size of a small transport can made portions of ships witch than be quickly put together even without a need of a spaedock. Although this meant a relatively weak structure compared to that of the Halcyon class, the introduction of shields compensated for this. The Banshee is widely regarded as the "ship that won the war at space". The ships guns were actually weaker compare to that of the ones used in the HCW, but the introduction of mass effect fields meant that they were capable of achieving same velocity of their old counterparts. This meant that each ship was capable of delivering nearly five times more firepower than their predecessors. The cannons used by Banshee were by the biggest caliber of cannon ever put on ships. While this meant the shells were slower, the added mass ensured that the shells will create total mayhem upon impact. A full broadside or a salvo form its entire front cannons was enough to obliterate a CCS-class battlecruiser long before they reached their own optima weapons range. An example of Banshees destructive capability was the 2nd battle of Reach which is now called by many as the "Open season" where more than a dozen captains were credited with destroying 10-12 capital ships alone. A peculiar feature of the Banshee was it's oversized sensor/jamming array. Located at the aft of the upper superstructure, the main purpose of this heavily fortified complex was to serve as a power full jamming array. It was quite successful in this role as it was capable of distracting magnetic lock of Plasma torpedoes by transmitting random magnetic signatures. The secondary purpose was it to serve as the "gun laying" system for the ships main guns for extra longe range firing. A surprising feature of the Banshee was that it is a self sustaining warship. It can provide its crew with fresh vegetables every week from its micro nursery and fresh meat every month from its small livestock shed. It was fully capable of recycle 98% of its water supply and its workshop can make anything form a screwdriver to a starfighter if enough resource is available. More nearly a thousand of these ships were produced till the end of the war and production didn't stop till the formation of confederacy. The sheer number and the upgrade potential of the Banshee meant they are going to serve as the main ships of the Terran navy for centuries to come.

Notable** Banshee-Cass-****Heavy cruiser:**

UNSC/** ITSS Banshee (CL-18): **The first of her kind, Famous for being the flagship of Vice-admiral/Empress Athena and for her role in the "Terran revolution". Crippled during the liberation of Harvest, She is now a floating museum in orbit above Earth.

UNSC/** ITSS ****Dhaka (****CL-75****): **Famousfor her action during the Alliance-covenant war. Currently serving as the flagship of the 75th reserve flotilla/mothballed.

**UNSC Arrow (CL-65): **Flagship of Fleet admiral Bill MacMillan. Destroyed by the Banshee during the Terran revolution.

**Well there you go the Third part. I hope I didn't overdo it. The next part will cover the Chiefs escape plan; I am hoping to finish it soon. Not going to promise anything though. My life is facing more difficulties every day. **

**PS: If anyone wondering how the Citadel or the Reapers can hope to match the Humans, let's just say, both are going to be their least of their worries. This story for the most part is going to take a road of its own and it is NOT going to follow the ME-3 ending. (Still can't get myself to play ME 3 in story mood) **

And again **please forgive my grammatical/spelling mistakes.**

And finally,

Please R&R.

4. Chapter 4: Some deals simply don't work

**Well it nice to see not everyone is forgotten about this story. Thanks you all for the reviews. **

** Minor Itch****: Noted. Will do that from now on. **

**Let's not waste any more time then **

Disclaimer**:**

I do not own Halo or Mass Effect.

This is AU so do not complain about the storyline being "Non-cannon" or something as like that.

My English is HORRIBOL so please forgive my grammatical mistakes.

**Act 1: Sly deal **

January/11/2662

Milky Way/Minos Wasteland/ Caestus system

Near planet Temerarus

Onboard the **UNSC ****Forward Unto Dawn.**

Cargo Bay 9

"You're what?" The surprise in Gadas voice was absolute.

"A Specter. Can't you hear?" The reply came from the armored giant sounded a bit annoyed.

"But what species are you? What is that armor? And what kind of weapons are those?" Gadhas mouth briefly became a mass accelerator on its own right as all the questions in his head started to come out altogether.

"Ok to answer your first question, I'm an Asari. It's this armor that is huge." The figure replied. "And the answer to second question is this is an alien armor, I found it in this ship. Same goes for the weapons."

"What are you doing in here? Is this some kind of trap?" Gadha and his people quickly begun to scan the bay for more contacts.

"Oh it's a trap alright, but not for you guys, for me." The figure, or as it claimed the Asari replied. Her voice contained a fair amount of frustration. "Two days ago my ships warp core gone critical while I was maneuvering through the fields. I managed to dump the core and maneuver it here. My ships backup went dead as soon I landed. Now I'm stuck in this place."

"Wait. If you got stuck here two days ago, how the hell you're still alive?" Boka, who was till now was just observing the situation quickly pointed out the obvious gap in the story. "You're suit shouldn't provide more than 5 hours of oxygen."

"Her armor." Gadha filled the gap for the Asari. "It's nothing like I've ever seen. She probably salvaged it form this ship, along with the weapons."

"Glad to see someone here has a functioning brain." The Asari said. "Yeah I found it in one of the armory of this ship. Great thing, has its own oxygen generator of some sorts."

"Cortana, that's a bit too much." Chief, secure in the knowledge they Batarians won't hear him as Cortana taken over the outer coms, spoke up.

"Chief, in front of them is a 7 feet tall behemoth with energy weapons in its hand. They'll buy anything I say right now." Cortana hastily reassured him.

"So what you want form us?" Baka asked, "Transportation?"

"No shit sherlocâ€¦I mean yes." Cortana would bit her lip if she had one right now but fortunately for her, the Batarians ignored it.

"Humm, since it was obviously you who wiped out the ships core and likely responsible for Alpha and Bravo teams "disappearance", why we would help you?" While Gadha's voice was relatively hostile, there was also a tone of interest in it.

"They opened fire just as I popped up to say hi, what am I suppose to do?" Her voice was contained a sizable amount of frustration. "And I have no idea who the hell was boarding so I took precautions."

"Even if we choose to ignore those, what can you possibly offer to us?" Gadha already had a clear idea what is the reply going to be but he decided to ask anyway.

"A sizable amount or credits, a clean sweep of your records and for you First office Gadha, the Torment." While the reply stunned everyone else Gadha let out a small smirk under his helmet.

"And how do you planned to do that?" Boka asked.

"This ship contains an arsenal of advance weapons. And according to Alpha and Beta leaders log, the crew is a royally pissed at you captain. If you people get out of the shuttle with these weapons, most of the crew will side with you." The Asari or to be more civilized, Cortana replied.

"And where do you come in this plan." Gadha resisted his urged to roll eyes upon hearing Boka's question.

"I'm have a pretty clear idea how to use these weapons, two days in a wrecked alien ship gives you a perfect opportunity to try out new toys." There was a bit of sarcasm in Cortana's voice. "And unless you guys forgotten, I took down two heavily armed squad all by my own. And you guys could really use some heavy muscle."

"Fair enough," Gadha said. "I assume you want us to take you to the citadel and give up this ship?"

"As I already said you'll be well compensated for that." Cortana replied.

"Not good enough," Gadha declared. "We are going to keep half the weapons and this ships FTL drive."

"You can keep some of the weapons but not the FTL Drive." Cortana voice contained a hefty amount of anger. "That will go to the citadel and that is not for negotiations."

"Fine." But you're going to share what you learn from it with Batarian Hegemony. "Gadha countered."

"Ah, a pirate with strong patriotism." The amusement in Cortanas voice was pretty clear. "Interesting. Fine I'll recommend it to the council but I can't do much more than that."

"Then we have a deal." Gadha said after while lowering his weapon. "Let's begun to load the shuttle with weapons, we don't want be short on our main advantage."

"Follow me." Cortana said after lowering her hand.

"Gadha is it really wise to agree with her?" Baka slowly whispered in a private comm. "We have no idea if she's going to keep her end of her bargain."

"Don't know about her but I know I won't." Gaha replied.

"You won't?" Boka was so surprised that he stopped walking for a moment.

"Ofcourse not." Gadha said with a grin in his face. "As soon we have control of the ship we'll wait for her to take that armor off. She's wearing it for two days I'm sure she's anxious to get out of it. As soon as she doseâ€¦"

"We're going to give her the end of the bargain in our terms." Boka finished the word with a grin of his own.

"Told you they can't be trusted." Chef said after hearing the hacked

conversation.

"Yeah well on their defense we are not going to keep the end of our bargain either." Cortana replied.

Chief smiled as he realized something. "Well, he stated, they should know it is not wise make a deal with the Demon."

Cortana made double sure that the outer com lines are secured as her laughter would make the Batarinas jump if they weren't.

****Act 2: The giant gyro ****

****January/11/2662****

****Milky Way / Orion Arm / Exodus Cluster / Utopia System ****

****Near planet Zenon****

****Onboard the ****ITSS Prometheus****.****

Commander Katyusha Petrova hides a yawn. She transferred into Imperial Border Security Fleet from the Armada hoping to see some action, but unfortunately for her, so far it's been the same old story. In last two year of service in IBSF, she only had chase down two smuggling freighter whose captains surrendered as soon as she reached as close as 5000 meters. She lets out a sigh. Well that's the gift and curse for commanding a fast ship which has three MAC in the nose. She thought.

She looked around the bridge. Everywhere seems to be a feel of lull. Like her, the crew is also becoming bored from routine missions without any kind of excitement whatsoever. At least you get some monthly training excises in the Armada, she thought bitterly. In IBSF excises take place in only twice a year while the scale is actually bigger than that of the Armada, the given objectives are nowhere close to posing a challenge. Two more months, she thought, then I'm going back to the Armadaâ€¦|

"Sir, we got a priority transmission from the survey ship Pathfinder in Asguard system." Felix Tinker, the ships communications officer, suddenly reported.

"Then againâ€¦|"

Straighten herself on the chair, Katyusha looks towards the young blond male, "what it's says?" She asked.

"It seems the ship found some kind of alien space installation there," Felix stated. "It is consist of two fifteen-kilometer long curved metal arms surrounding a set of revolving, gyroscopic rings five-kilometers across. These rings seem to contain a massive, blue-glowing core of element zero. That thing became active as soon as they started scanning it."

"What is their status now?" She asked with slight concern in her voice. The Pathfinder is one of the oldest survey ships in service. It's a refitted Phoenix-class colony ships. While it's rather heavily armed for a survey ship, in this scenario, it's likely way out of its depth for any unforeseen and potentially violent incident.

"They are keeping a distance of 10000 Kilometers from the object and holding positions." "And Commender," Suddenly Felix's voice became bit startled.

"What is it?" Katyusha immediately noticed the change.

"Apparently one of the ships escort fighter got slingshoted by it to the other end of Milky Way." The sudden announcement left the entire bridge crew dumbfounded for a moment.

"It did what?" Katyusha's first officer, lieutenant commander Valdmir Boris, shot out the very question that currently dominating everyone's mind.

"One of their fighters got close to inspect the object," Felix continued. "As soon as it did, it got stuck by some short of energy discharge from it and seemed to be catapulted into lightspeed. While there was some debate at the start about what happened to the fighter, five minutes later it reappeared near the structure. According to the pilot, He found a similar device at the destination and used it to travel back."

"Exactly how far did he travel?" Katyusha's mind was filled with more questions than she can count, but she decided to ask the question that is likely everyone is wondering about.

"According to the pilots chart log, they ended up in a system inâ€|. " Felix trailed off in disbelief for a moment, "Hades Gamma cluster, Crab Nebula." He finished the line in a barely hearable voice.

Silent once again filled the bridge.

"And there's more," Felix's voice became somewhat emotionless after being hit by countless waves of unbelievable information. "That thing does not look like a Forerunner made object, in fact, it bears a noticeable resemble with the alien outpost found in Mars during 2550."

Katyusha slowly returned to her chair and sat down. Her mind is spinning faster than a Puma's wheels in full throttle. She needs some breathing space.

"Orders, Commander?" Boris, while suffering from similar effects he decided to pull back His Commander into reality after waiting five long minutes.

Pulling herself together, Katyusha begun to give orders in her characteristic calm and controlled manner. "Boris, put the ship in alert one, Helm, set a course for Asguard and Kika,"

"Yes Commander?" The ships AI, who is modeled after a shy young Showa-era Japanese girl popped up in the commander chair's holoprojector.

"Make sure this ship is ready for a battle." Katyusha words were short, but the weight it carried briefly made Kika to disregard her shy character and give a straight answer:

"She will be."

Acknowledging with a nod, Katyusha looked at the pitch black hole started to form in front of the ship.

She smiled. "_Screw Armada."_ She thought. "_This is where the action is."_

****Act 3: Never trust the demon ****

****January/11/2662****

****Milky Way/Minos Wasteland/ Caestus system****

****Near planet Temerarus****

****Onboard the ****Batarian shuttle****.****

Chief scanned his surroundings. This shuttle is obviously used to transport slaves. The entire room is practically a large container with one stair leading to the Cockpit. Two of the Batarian are guarding the door and there is a machinegun up there to which is likely use to keep the slaves in line. Gadha, Nola and the pilot are in the cockpit while the rest of the crew are with him.

"Well Chief, let's begin phase two." Chief acknowledged Cortana's invitation and begun to walk for the stairs.

"Wait where are you going?" One of the guards grading the door immediately challenged the armored figure as he reached the top floor.

"I have to speak with Gadha." Cortana once again took up a responsibility of talking.

"Talk what?" Despite his attempt to look tough, chief can clearly see the fear in the Batarians four eyes.

"That is none of your business." The ice cold voice of Cortana quickly made the poor sod to reconsider his stand.

"Hey! I thought you're going to teach us how these weapons works." One of the slavers shouted from downstairs.

"I will do that as soon as I'm done with Gadha," Cortana replied. "In the meanwhile, take your picks."

Nodding to the reply, the slavers begun to scavenge through the weapon pile.

"They sure look excited." Cortana commented as they passed the door.

"Can't blame them, some of those weapons are nothing like they ever seen." Chief replied.

"Too bad they won't get the chance will they?" There was a bit of amusement in Cortana's voice.

Replying with a nod Chief approached Boka. Who was standing in what

can be best described as armory of the shuttle.

Chief approached him. "Looks like you took a plasma rifle." Cortana commented in a friendly tone.

"Yeah well you still don't taught me how to uses these though." Boka was quick to point out.

"True. Here let me show you." With that Chief closed the distance as Cortana begun to instruct Boka.

"Now, hold the rifle like this. There is a small notch in the upper side of the handle and that is the trigger. This thing can get overheated very easily and when they do you don'tâ€¦"

While Cortana kept Boka occupied, Cheif discreetly pulled out a spike he dislodged from one of the spike grenades. Boka didn't even had the time to realize what happen as the spike went through right through his brain via the neck joint.

Chief gently put down the body to make sure there is no loud noise and start heading for the cockpit.

The cockpit had a side by side arrangement with Gadha sitting on the co-pilot seat. Hearing footsteps, he turned and asked: "What are you doing here?"

"Came to see if our deal is still in one peace." Cortana replied shortly.

Gadha snorted. "Now why would I break a vow?" While his voice sounded as innocent as that of a little boy, his cocky smile told Chief that the thought has indeed crossed his mind.

"Stop playing innocent, it doesn't suite you." The annoyed tone in Cortana's voice made Gadha drop his smile as he turned for the controls again.

"Well I'm about the contact the Torment. You want me to add something?" Gadha asked.

"Ask him is there any heavy defense in the hanger. And if there is, what is the best way to neutralize them?" Chief told to Cortana.

"What kind of defense you guys installed in the hanger, and how we can naturalize them?" Cortana asked Gadha.

"Well there are two heavy automated turret on the roof but don't worry, I have their access code," Gadha replied with the guff smile. "I can disable them or can program their IFF to shoot anyone who is not going to join our little "revolution"."

"Cortana, we could use those." Chief said.

"I need those access codes. Just in case you don't have the funny idea of ripping me to shreds." Cortana said to Gadha.

"Well aren't you paranoid?" Gadha commented with an amused tone. "Anyway here, the last thing I want that you're blowing away my head

because of a stray shot. Speaking of that, why the hell you're using the Alpha leader's omni-tool? Gadha was clearly surprised."

"I lost mine while putting on this armor." Cortana quickly handled the situation.

"I see." Gadha said. "Anyway I'm about to contact Tormentâ€|."

"Cortana, those guns makes the hanger a nice kill zone." Chief quickly pointed out to Cortana,

"You should tell them that you found something," Cortana said. "It'll sure gather some crowds. The more people in the hanger the more manpower we will have on our side. And those turrets will also serve as a nice persuasion tool."

Humm. "I like that idea." Gadha said. Opening a channel to the Torment, he said, "This is Gadha, access code 3-Yak-Haramzada-2-Bodmise, I have found something, meet me at the hanger bay!" While the excitement in his voice was forged, it sure was convincing.

Turning off com. Gadha relaxed. "Well now that's over," he said, "anything else you want to say?"

"Yeah." Chief said on the outer com. Both and Gadha and the pilot was about to jump out of their chair but discovered that a pair of metal covered hands are wrapped tight on their necks.

"I don't deal with slavers." With that declaration, chief snapped both of their necks.

"Well that went well." Cortana commented.

Pushing aside the pilot's lifeless body, Chief put his left arm on the control panel. There was a faint golden shimmer as Cortana downloaded herself onto the control panel.

"We need vent the cargo bay." Chief said as he sat on the pilot's chair.

"Here is a good chance the Torment's sensor will pick it up," Cortana said with a concerned tone. "And besides, there is a much more efficient way available. Her voice suddenly recovered her usual cheerful tone."

"Let me guess, the cargo bay doubles as a gas chamber." It wasn't hard for Chief to figure it out, as something like that is pretty standard in this line of business.

"Yep and guess what, it works almost instantly." For a moment Chief found Cortana's tone to a bit too cheerful but decided to ignore.

"Do it." He said.

The people in the cargo bay were getting anxious. They already chosen their weapons and were eager to try them. But their teacher, an oversize armored Specter, has yet to come back from the cockpit. Some

of the started to wonder what is going on.

Suddenly, they all started to feel their lungs burning like wildfire. Their hand became numb, their legs refused to take their weight. They all fell in the floor chocking for air.

It is difficult to say what they all though in their last seconds. Some though about taking vengeance, a few thought about their loved ones, while other wondered what did they do wrong and why they were betrayed. In 5 second however, all their thoughts faded away as their lifeless boys lays besides the weapons that they were so eager to train with.

Back onboard the Torment, Slavers of various races Asari, Batarians, Turians and even a few Korgans, gathered to see what did their first officer brought from the mysterious alien ship. When the shuttle entered the hanger bay, a lot of them rushed to the hatch to be the first to see the alien artifacts.

When the Door opened, they saw a 7 feet long armored figure, encased in a charred dark green armor with a white alien marking on its chest. It was wearing a green helmet that had an orange visor that has no sense of life in it. In the figures hand was a three barreled weapons which started to spin as soon as the door completely opened.

"Time to clean this ship." With that declaration, chief opened fire.

****Codex Entry (Humans â€"Military- Terran Imperial Fleet):
Miranda-class corvette.****

****Profile: [\(http\)\(:/ /\)\(media\).\(moddb\).com\(/\)images/members/1/580/579031/Blackbird.\(png\)](http://(media).(moddb).com(/)images/members/1/580/579031/Blackbird.(png)) (Remove the brackets and spaces)**

****Length: 241 meters.****

****Height: 41 meters****

****Weight: 110 meters.****

****Displacement: ****62,659 tonnes****. ****

****Aviation facilities: 1 small Hanger facilities.****

****Armaments: Block 1, ACW Era:****

****8x ****Archer ****Missile**** pad (38 missiles per pad).****

****2x Harpoon disruptor torpedo bay (12x missiles per bay)******

>3x 5 inch Mark 3 mod 2 ****Hull mounted Magnetic accelerator cannons.****

****90x HAVOC tactical nuclear mine.****

****Block 2 Imperial Era:****

****8x J****avelin ****Missile**** pad (38 missiles per pad).****

****2x Rapier disruptor torpedo bay (12x missiles per bay)******

>3x 5 inch Mark 3 mod 2 ****Hull mounted Magnetic accelerator cannons.****

****60x MAYTHEM tactical antimatter mine.****

****Defenses: Block 1, ACW Era:****

****5x 50mm**** dual chemical reaction****Point-defense guns.****

****7x Agent V missile pad (150 missiles per pad).****

****Energy shielding.****

****Kinetic barriers****. ****

****Block 2 Imperial Era:****

****5x dual Gauss****Point-defense guns .****

****7x Agent VI missile pad (150 missiles per pad).****

****Energy shielding.****

****Kinetic barriers****. ****

****Crew: 80 (1 If operated by an A.I.) ****

****120 Marine & ODS. ****

****Complement: 1 squadron of starfighters, 12 other crafts and 24 vehicles. ****

"_The older Charon class frigates are plane suicidal. The refitted Paris class frigates are bloodthirsty. But the new Miranda-class corvettes, they are both suicidal and bloodthirsty. If you see a group of those heading your way, you better hope that the Forerunners heed your prayers." _

-Unnamed Brute Fleetmaster.****

Miranda-class was a radical departure from typical UNSC doctrine. While typically UNSC preferred to avoid close range confrontations and favored long range volley exchange, the Miranda-class was designed to the exact opposite. Designed to for close range assault, it job was to rush in, fire its ordnance and get the hell out before the enemy can react. The ship was simply put, overpowered, overgunned and was very hard to detect thanks to its numerous stealth futures. All these came at the cost of a hefty pricetag however, as one of these corvettes build cost were almost equal of that of a Peacetime Paris-class frigate. This with the radical concept initially led to the ships facing much criticism and opposition and only 10 were ordered. However, their excellent performance at the start of Operation Overdrive led to UNSC ignore the all the opposition and order full production. Thousands of these corvettes were produced throughout the war and afterwards and by the end of the war it practically replaced all other Corvettes and frigate in the frontline service. It heavy armament of three 5 inch MAC and disruptor torpedoes made it an excellent ship for countering enemy light

warships and when fighting in group, they were lethal even to the biggest ships of the Covenant Navy. A popular attack move against capital ships was a group of 4 to 6 Miranda corvettes will punch a small hole in the ships defensive shields. Then 1 or 2 Miranda that were following will quickly close in and jettisons their complement of HAVOC mines over the hole with the mines onboard thrusters pushing them inside before the gap is closed. The explosion was usually strong enough to destroy a ship outright or at very least would knock it out of combat. The move was initially called "Pattern suicide" but later officially called "Attack move Defiant" after the lead ship of the strike group that invented it. A century after its debut, the Miranda is still in production and the most numerous ships in the Human Navy and currently active in every branch of human military. A replacement of the ships has been on discussion for more than half a century but like the Banshee, it's large numbers and upgrade potential means its replacement isn't going to enter service anytime soon.

****Notable ****Miranda-class corvette:**

>UNSC Miranda (K-1444): ****Lead ship of the class. Destroyed during the Battle of Reach.**

>UNSCITSS Defiant (K-234): ****Leader of the strike group Defiant. Decommissioned and now preserved as a museum Ship on planet Reach.**

>****ITSS SSV Krusk (K-752): ****First Block-II Miranda-class corvette. Joined the Alliance Navy during the rebellion. Destroyed while carrying Alliance dignitaries.**

****PS: Yes I reversed the location of the Mass relay obvious reasons.

****And again ****please forgive my grammatical/spelling mistakes.****

****And finally,****

****Please R&R.****

5. Chapter 5: Looks can be deciveing

****A/N: Guys I GET IT! Enough with bullets already! I received no less than 7 messages regarding this and I'm not even counting the reviews. Just please consider it as a plot device from now on.****

****PS: Many thanks to project 501D13R for Proof-reading the chapter.

****Disclaimer****:****

****I do not own Halo or Mass Effect.****

****This is AU so do not complain about the storyline being "Non-cannon" or something as like that.****

****My English is HORRIBOL so please forgive my grammatical mistakes.****

****Act 1: Unwanted Attention ****

****January/11/2662****

****Milky Way / Hades Gamma Cluster / Antaeus System****

****Near Planet Hunidor****

****Onboard the Turian Dreadnought Pride of Palaven.****

Captain Mankanaze Modon stared through the viewport. While it provided an excellent view of the orbiting gas giant, the Captain was too preoccupied to notice it. His mind was racing with the questions that started after reading the report he received from his ships long range sensors.

Less than a minute ago a small one man craft entered in this system. It didn't resemble any known design and went back almost as soon as it came. While a scout frigate is currently scanning the relay to know where the ship came from, all the indication so far hints a first contact scenario. And the last first contact scenario is anything to go by.

"Captain, you look worried." Turning back, he saw General Desolas Arterius, his superior officer and commander of the entire combined forces.

"Well sir, it looks like we have found a new civilization." After delivering a sharp salute, Mankanaze replied.

Nodding in reply, General replied with a wide smile, "Sure looks like it, isn't it wonderful?"

The veteran Captain rubbed his neck in discomfort, "Well sir our encounter with the Rachni was anything but wonderful". He replied.

"The Rachni were an extremely violent race and had clearly been in space for a century at least, this race however has clearly only begin to explore the stars and is still quite primitive." Desolas said with firm confidence.

"Sir, with all due respect we have no idea of knowing that-" Mankanaze was abruptly cut off by Desolas.

"Calm down Captain," Desolas said offhandedly. "Look at that ships energy emissions, it barely has any, and look at its size, do you think an advanced civilization would use a ship that small to explore the galaxy? They've obviously only just begun to explore the stars!"

"But sir," Mankanaze again tried to voice his opinion but once again he was dismissed by Desolas.

"You're worrying too much Captain," Desolas dismissed the concerns of his second-in-command. "They are obviously a very reckless and primitive species."

"Reckless, sir?" Mankanaze was unsure what his superior officer meant by that.

"They violated a direct Citadel law by activating the Mass Relay, and

we are required by that law to police them," Desolas said. Mankanaze once again opened his mouth but Desolas's finishing words made him silent.

"A reckless species like this must be put under the control of the Hierarchy to ensure the safety of the galaxy". Desolas declared.

'Oh ,so that what it's about!' Mankanaze though. _'He is not interested in enforcing the law, not exactly, he's far more interested in capturing the race. An action like that would make him famous throughout the Hierarchy.'_

'_Not that it's a bad thing'_ Mankanaze again though. He too is going to share the credit and integration of a new species has its advantages. _'Besides,_ _they did violate the Citadel law, and that calls for a response.'_

"How many ships do you want to send General?" steeling himself, Mankanaze asked.

"The entire fleet, Captain." Desolas replied flatly.

"The entire fleet, sir?" Mankanaze was clearly surprised. "But sir if it is a primitive civilization we don't need toâ€| "

"Intimidation is a very effective weapon against lesser races, Captain." Desolas said in a condescending tone. "Besides, the entire fleet is here for training, the policing and integration of a primitive species would be a valuable experience for them."

"As you wish sir." Mankanaze decided to put an end to the conversation as the General clearly made up his mind.

"Message from the from the scout frigate Captain" A young voice came through the comm. They have confirmed that the ship is in fact from uncharted space and have the coordinates. They are now awaiting orders.

"Tell them to standby. And put the fleet on alert." Mankanaze replied.

"Understood Captain." With that reply, the comm went silent.

"Well Captain, shall we proceed?" Desolas said with a smile that likely won't disappear anytime soon.

Nodding, Mankanaze started heading towards the bridge. He has to address the crew about this while Desolas gets permission from the High command. And Mankanaze knows that he won't be denied.

****Act 2: Spartan Room service****

****January/11/2662****

****Milky Way/Minos Wasteland/ Caestus system****

****Near planet Temerarus****

****Onboard the Batarian slavers frigate Torment.****

Off all the nine persons that stood in front of the ships, most even didn't had the chance to call their personal gods before being torn into shreds by a hail of 7.62x51mm bullets form Chief's AIE-486H Heavy Machine Gun. The other six that were standing throughout the hanger didn't had the chance to be surprised as slugs form the roof turrets turned them into Swiss cheese before they could be sure what they are watching.

"Well this is a nice start," Cortana commented as Chief stepped off the shuttle. "Only nine remains. Who said elements of surprise is no longer decisive?"

"No one." Chief gave a short reply and asked, "What kind of obstacle it there between us and the Bridge?"

"Nothing serious, just some small defense turrets andâ€|" Cortana was interrupted by a series of noise.

Suddenly three crates in the cargo bay begun to unpack. Within seconds, they grew legs, a pair of arms which contained an arsenal of weapons and a large round head with a pair of vertical red "Eye" in the middle.

"â€|Those." Cortana finished her sentence.

Dropping the heavy weapon, Chief quickly dived for cover behind a nearby crate. The heavy turrets immediately opened fire but rocket fire from the giant mechs simply tore them to shreds.

"Cortana a little help?" Chief said as the mechs begun to close in his position.

"Hold on" Cortana said as she quickly begun to surf though the Omi-tool database. "Those are Hahne-Kedar YMIR Mech, factory designation Model 34-A, but more commonly called a Heavy Mech. Heavily armed with twin automatic mass accelerator cannons concealed in the right arm and a rocket launcher in the left and has heavy armor and shield to protect itself. However, it is slow and cumbersome. The head is a weak spot but you have to take down its shields and armor reinforcement that protects it first. Try to stick to cove and fire suppressive shotsâ€|"

Before Cortana could finish, Chief bolted out of cover and charged straight for the nearby mech. The giant killing machine turned to face him but Chief jumped as soon the mech raised it weapons. Propelling himself in the air, Chief primed and shoved a plasma grenade in the mech's head. Carrying on the momentum he jolted towards another mech, and took cover behind him. The third mech immediately tracked the movement and fired a rocket toward him which struck home on the mech that was front of Chief. Chief quickly pulled out his pair of M6G that he swapped for the Needlers from the shuttle and fired six shot on the now unprotected head of the mech. Then he dived for his discarded Machine Gun. As soon as he picked it up, both of the mech violently exploded.

Aiming it towards the lone mech that was recovering for the explosion of his brethrens, Chief opened fire. The bullets shattered what remained of the kinetic barrier and punched trough armor like they were wet tissue paper. Within seconds the lifeless hulk of the mech

slammed to the ground and exploded.

"â€|That works too." Cortana said in a slightly amused voice.

"What's next" Chief said as he dropped the weapon and picked up a M45 Tactical Shotgun from the shuttle.

"Well all of them have likely taken position in the bridge, " Cortana said, but Apparently they have about 30 LOKI Mechs and some defense drone. They are going to slow us down a bit but I don't thinkâ€|CHIEF SHOOT THAT RED BOX!" Cortana suddenly screamed and marked a red circuit box in John's HUD .

Without asking question, Chief quickly pulled one of his M6G and fired multiple shot at the box. The box let out a stream of sparks as it got hit.

"Phew. They were going to disable the force field," Cortana said with relief. "Couple more seconds and they would've vent us to space." Recovering, Cortana came back on topic. "Chief pack some extra frag grenades, LOKI's find strength in numbers and are slow moving, frags will do wonder in close combat."

Nodding, Chief discarded half of his Plasma grenades and replaced them with frags.

"This way chief." Cortana said as she marked a door.

Raising his shotgun. Chief carefully entered the narrow corridor. Cortana sealed the door behind to make sure no one will have access to the hanger bay.

****Act 3: Exploration in force****

****January/11/2662****

****Milky Way / Orion Arm / Exodus Cluster / Asguard** **System****

****Near Asteroid X57****

****Onboard the ITSS Prometheus.****

Commander Katyusha was standing in front of the holographic table. In front of her is the holograph of Captain Ali Bokor, Commander of the survey ship Pathfinder. A well aged and veteran officer, he has a well built body and really bright blue eyes. In besides him is another holograph of a much younger and well looking blond woman, wearing a white lab coat and holding a pad in her left hand. She is Professor Natasha Petrova, Pathfinder's Chief science officer and her elder sister .For the last 30 minutes, they and Katyusha spoke nothing but the incident and relay and Katyusha's mind is still busy with deciphering half the technical terms her sister so far babbled out. She can't help but wonder if her sister is deliberately using those terms as she haven't contacted her for six months. And that's more than enough to piss her sister off.

"Well Commander, I will return to my duties I'm sure you and Professor Petrova have a lot to catch up." Captain Bokor said to

Katyusha and disappeared from the table. She can't help but notice the relief in Captains face just before his face disappeared. She couldn't blame him, as she too would love get away from this nightmare of a briefing.

"Shall we proceed, Commander?" While Natasha's voice contained a calm professional tone, the coldness in her green eye's told Katyusha she's far from being clam.

"Oh come on Sis! How much more you're planning to torture me?" Katyusha simply had enough of her sister's technobabble rampage.

"Six hours, sir." Natasha's answer came with a sinister grin.

"Look Sis, I'm sorry all right?" Katyusha voice sounded as tired as it sounded desperate. "It was a classified raid, I was no allowed to tell anyone about it, not even to you."

"You could inform me that you're going under, sir." Natasha's voice while slightly soften, was still emotionless for the most part.

"I will do that next time. Now please forgive me, Pleeeese?" Katyusha expressed her apology with an expression that is commonly described as ''Puppy eyes".

"Oh, for God's sake Katyusha drop that look. " Natasha failed to keep her professional appearance anymore as smile busted out of her face. "Mother was right, you can make yourself look as cute as a polar bear cub when apologizing."

"There is a reason why I was rarely grounded." Katyusha replied with a smile of her own.

"Anyway how it is with you and Boris? Have you two gone on a date yet?" The sudden question for her elder sister put Katyusha off balance, literally.

"Boris? What is it with him an me?" Despite her best attempt to look innocent, the blood gathered in her cheeks showed her true emotion.

"Oh come on Katyusha, don't you think I don't know what trouble you went through to have him assigned as your first officer? Or how you ALWAYS checking him out while he is looking the other way? " Katyusha can't remember when the last time she saw her sister was smiling so widely.

Katyusha remained silent. But the increase of blood in her cheeks replied for her.

"So how far you two went?" Natasha smile is a wide as ever.

"Wellâ€¦" Katyusha grasped for appropriate words but unfortunately couldn't find any.

Natasha's smile disappeared. "You haven't even told him that you like him, did you?" her voice suddenly became sharp.

"What if rejects me sis? What if I'm not good enough for him?" Briefly, Katyusha didn't sound like an Imperial officer who is commanding a military ship, but as a lovestruck teenager who got struck with the ultimate question.

"WHAT IF HE REJECTS YOU!" To say Natasha was furious would be a colossal understatement. "Look at you! A 5.9 feet tall women with golden hair and emerald eyes, a body and a face that looks like they were made for a Greek goddess, callable of cooking 26 different cuisine, how can you be NOT good enough for him! Don't you remember how many guys asked you out in your entire academic life?"

"46." Katyusha said in a bemused voice. "You'll never let me forget that."

"And you rejected ALL of them!" Natasha voice is overwhelmed with frustration. "To this day you haven't even kissed a single boy OR girl! And you're 124 years old!"

"Sis, you're overreacting." Katyusha weakly tried to handle the situation.

"Overreacting? OVERREACTING!" Natasha apparently slammed her fist on the table in front of her. "After all this time, my little sister finds a boy she likes and even after sharing the same bulkhead for the last two years, can't tell him that she like him? Wait till mother hears about this."

"Mother!" Katyusha all but cried out in panic. "Sis let's make a deal."

"What deal?" Natasha suddenly became interested.

"Well I'm going to take one Captain Bokor's advice and scout the other side of the device for while re-enforcement arrives." Katyusha said. "If I find friendly aliens or no aliens in the other side of the device as you predicted, you won't tell this to mother. "But, if I find hostile aliens"

"You'll kiss Boris" Natasha declared.

"WHAT!" Katyusha's face became instant red.

"That's the deal, take it or leave it." Natasha said with the old sinister grin. "Even the possibility of first contact is extremely low so you finding another Covenant is quite unlikely. That fact alone skyrockets the stakes. "

"Fine" Katyusha said after letting out a long berth. "I'm going to prepare for the ships for departure."

"Hey Katy," The suddenly soft tone of her sister voice haven't gone unnoticed by Katyusha, "Be careful" She said with genuine concern in both her face and voice.

A soft smile spared across Katyusha face, "I will be Sis don't you worry" with that Katyusha ended the communication and exited the Communications Room. She has a lot to take care of.

****Act 4: What could go wrong?****

****January/11/2662****

****Milky Way / Hades Gamma Cluster / Antaeus System****

****Near Planet Hunidor****

****Onboard the Turian Dreadnought Pride of Palaven.****

Mankanaze looked around the bridge. Both in front and around him are turian soldiers. Some of them are old and familiar, while others are new and young. Right now, all of them are facing him. Their faces sparkled with confidence and pride. They are among the finest his race has to offer and right now all of them are waiting for his orders, orders that they will carry out at any cost.

Hearing the sound of door opening, he turned his chair and saw General Desolas entering the bridge. His wide smile and the small nod answered Mankanaze's unasked question.

Taking a deep breath, he ordered his communications officer, "Open a fleetwide channel"

"Yes sir." With a short reply, young communication officer quickly punched out a series of buttons on his panel. "Channel open." He soon reported.

The Captain stood up. He knows right now, the entire fleet is waiting for his voice and the world they will carry. After taking a large breath, he began:

"To all the crew and officer of the 14th fleet, as of by now you all may have heard of the mysterious ship that briefly entered this system and left. Many of you have speculated that it is from an alien civilization. That speculation is correct." Mankanaze took a brief pause so everyone can take the news. "It came from an unexplored region of space and we don't know anything about them." He once again took another pause as he personally doesn't quite agree with the later part of his speech but that is what the General instructed him to say. "While they could be part of an advanced civilization all indication so far indicates a primitive society that has only recently mastered space travel. They seem to be extremely reckless as they traveled through the relay with such a small and weak vessel that has little to no defensive capability against any kind of threat. Further, by reactivating the mass relay, they have shown complete disregard to council laws," 'Laws that they have no idea about' He briefly thought. "This kind of recklessness and disregard to galactic laws indicates that without proper guidance, this species can become as violent and aggressive as the Krogan and Rachni were. Guidance that only the Hierarchy can provide." He took one last pause and delivered the order he just received in his display, "In accordance to the Turian High-command order No:8960943, the 14th fleet is to neutralize this civilization's military capability and collect the species along their planets for Turian Hierarchy. "

>He looked at his crew and said "Do your duty, follow your orders. We have led many species to enlightenment by our teaching, this species is fortunate to receive it. "<p>

Everyone saluted the Captain in unison and returned to their

posts.

"Nice speech, Captain," Desolas closed in and spoke to Mankanaze at a low voice. "The crew is more determined than ever."

"I hope the Spirits will guide us in the right path." Mankanaze said with deep concern in his voice.

"Relax, Mankanaze" Desolas said. "This campaign will be over in less than 3 weeks."

"What could possibly go wrong?"

****A\N:** One of the reviewer pointed out that I'm making extremely long codex entries. We let's just say it cannot be helped as I'm Geek when it come to technical details and I find a story incomplete without details like those. So I have two ideas in mind:******

****I** can open a wiki. That will be difficult for me as I have no idea how to do it.******

****I** can post them in Deviantart (I use the same account name) and those who are interested can check them out. ******

****So** which one do you think is a better option? ******

6. Chapter 6: The day when all went wrong

****A/N;****** Once again I'm here apologizing for another long delay. The aftermath of my collage life has been troubling, and there were some family issues I have to adjust into. I'm currently begin studying Journalism in an university, hopefully I will retain enough time to work on this story. The problem is I'm also a 3d artist and a game lore writer (Anyone who was curious enough to Google my username would know), and I'm currently working on a modification of the game called "Star wars: Empire At War: Forces of Curruption" titled "The Second Clone War". I have to split my time between that and this story and that is quite frankly a difficult thing to do. ******

****Anyway** enough excuses, lets get on with the chapter.:******

****Disclaimer****:****

****I** do not own Halo or Mass Effect.******

****This** is AU so do not complain about the storyline being "Non-cannon" or something like that.******

****My** English is HORRIBLE so please forgive my grammatical mistakes.******

Act 1: Shooting gallery

January/11/2662

Milky Way/Minos Wasteland/ Caestus system

Near planet Temerarus

Onboard the Batarian slavers frigate Torment.

"Even UNSC training drones posed a greater threat than these." Chief commented in a bemused voice as he blew a Loki's head off with his shotgun.

"Well they were designed for security details not for war" Cortana defended her distanced cousins as Chief smashed another Loki's head with the butt of his shotgun.

"Still, people who built them could at least teach them how to take proper cover." Chief countered as he took cover from a group of six Loki and a defense turret that were literally raining bullets on him.

"Apparently there is a ban about doing that." Cortana replied as Chief threw a frag grenade in the midst of the group. "Citadel council imposed a ban about researching AI's and there are severe restrictions about how smart you can make a computer program."

"A bit paranoid, aren't they?" Chief commented as the grenade exploded, sending the drones flying in multiple pieces.

"They have their reasons," Cortana replied as Chief resumed his advance. "Almost three centuries ago, a race name the Quarrians created a machine race called Geth. They were meant as cheap labor and had limited intelligence but were able to communicate with each other. However some time after their creations, they apparently became self-aware."

"And turned against their masters?" Chief asked as he mowed down another group of mechs with his plasma rifles.

"Not exactly" Cortana replied. "When the Quarrians realized this they panicked and tried to shut them down, and the Geth fought back and drove the Quarrians away from their planets."

"So they fought back in self defense." Chief commented as he climbed out from the ships engine room to the crew quarters. He saw a pair of slavers commanding a dozen of Loki's from their cover. "What happened next? I'm guessing the Citadel races joined up with the Quarrians and wiped out the Geth?"

"Actually," Cortana replied as Chief opened fire from both of his plasma rifles. "They closed down the Quarrians embassies and kicked them out from the Citadel space."

"What?" Chief was so surprised that he briefly stopped firing.

"Officially, this was the 'Punishment' the Quarrians race received for creating AI's." Cortana said as Chief resumed fire. "Unofficially, I think they were simply covering their asses as retaking the Quarrians homeworld or rehabilitating them would have been very costly."

"So what happened to them and the Geth? " Chief asked as the burnt bodies of both slavers and their mech entourage hit the ground.

"The Quarrians put together what ships they had left and created what

later became known as the 'Migrant Fleet'. Think of it as a massive mobile City consisting of approximately 5,000 ships. They travel from system to system gathering resources and doing dirty jobs. Barely surviving. The Geth on the other hand never left the former Quarian territories. Every attempt to find out about their current status had an explosive ending. "

"Why didn't the Quarrians simply move to another planet and start over?" Chief asked as he headed for the service shaft that would take him to the Command deck.

"Something about their Immune system. They simply can't adapt to other environments aside from their home planets. Besides, after being kicked from the Council space they practically lost access to all known Mass relays. And from what I understand, these people rely on the relays a lot more than they should. "

"Couldn't they simply build their own?" Chief asked as he blasted two more mechs that were guarding the shafts.

"Apparently, the relays are ancient relics. They were made by a race called Protheans. Cortana replied as Chief began to climb the ladder. "They are five-kilometer long structures that use barely understandable methods to propel one ship from one relay to another instantaneously. It would take an enormous amount of resources to just to understand how it works and not to mention there is a ban by the Citadel council against that."

"Now why would they do that?" Chief briefly paused as he struggled to crawl through the cramped corridor "that." He finished.

"It's risky and apparently unnecessary." Cortana replied. "The risk is that the relays contain an enormous amount of the elements zero and one. If by any chance that one gets out of containment, the resulting explosion would theoretically be powerful enough to wipe out an entire star system. Unnecessary because there's still lots of dormant Mass relays throughout the Citadel space. Each would provide access to a star cluster filled with dozens of star systems."

"Why didn't the Quarrians simply begin to recon the relay that was outside or by the edge of Citadel space?" Chief asked as he began to climb another ladder. "Or is there a ban on that even?"

"Actually, there is." Cortana replied with a tone of amusement in her voice.

"So what was the reason this time, alien invasion?" Chief said with a slight sarcastic tone, but there was a trace of seriousness in it as well.

"As a matter of fact yes" Cortana replied. "More than two thousand years ago, while exploring a relay, a Salarian exploration team found a race called Rachni. They were an insect-like species native to the world Suen who apparently were very technologically advanced and highly aggressive. They captured the exploration team and reverse engineered their ships FTL drive and created an armada that they unleashed on the Citadel space. The council tried to put up a defense but they began to overwhelm Council forces with sheer weight of numbers. Things were looking very bad for them."

"So, what happened?" Chief asked as he began to crawl through another corridor.

"Korgan happened." Cortana replied. "They are a bipedal reptilian species native to the world Tuchanka, a planet where everything tries to kill you. As a result, the Korgun are extremely tough and capable of surviving in almost any environment. That combined with the fact that one female Korgun can pop out a thousand eggs per month, made them the perfect counter against the Rachni in the end.

"Why didn't the Korgan join the war from the start?" Chief asked as he began to climb the ladder.

"Apparently the Korgans were suffering from a nuclear winter. They were still a pre-spaceflight society when the Salarians found them. Halfway around the war they 'uplifted' the Korgans into galactic level." Cortana replied. "Chief we're only two compartments away from the bridge." Cortana said as Chief entered the command deck.

"Understood." Chief replied as he discarded his nearly depleted plasma rifles and pulled out Jonson's MA5C. Doing a quick check he asked Cortana, "So what happened next?"

"Well the Korgans' pushed the Rachni all the way back to their home world. When their queen refused to surrender, theyâ€¦" Cortana continued as Chief threw a flashbang at the bridge.

Although some would describe Captain Nola to be tense and worried, the term "panicking in a controlled manner" would be a much accurate description. Less than half an hour ago, Gadhra contacted the ship and claimed that he found something in the derelict alien ship. Everyone except the bridge crew and him went to see what their first officer found. But before they could understand what was happening, someone opened fire from the shuttle and the guns in the bay went berserk. Within seconds, everyone in the bay were killed.

Then, that "thing" came out of the shuttle.

Nola didn't know what species that creature belonged to. It looked like an Asari, but was as bulky and threatening as a Korgan. It was clad in heavy armor that showed numerous scars of battle. Overall, it reminded him of the Kopasamsu, the Batarian avatar of death.

Nola reacted quickly, he activated all three YMIR he had in the cargo bay, hoping the sheer weight and numbers would take care of this menace. It seemed to work at first as the thing was pinned down by the heavy fire from the mechs, but then it bolted out and destroyed the three mechs in seconds, using weapons that he had only seen in science fiction vids. He then tried to disable the hangar force field, but that thing somehow figured it out and took out the circuit junction right before it carried out the command.

Then, it began to climb up.

Nola threw everything he had, along with his entire arsenal of LOKI mechs, but that thing mowed them down like they were hordes of Pyzacks. He sent two of his men to co-ordinates the mechs but they lasted only a little longer. Now that thing is right in front of the bridge.

Suddenly, the door on the starboard side opened up, and before they could understand what was going on an object was thrown onto the bridge. Everyone immediately took cover, but when the thing didn't go off in a bang like everyone expected, even after two long minutes, curiosity took over some of the unfortunate Batarians. One gathered enough courage to slowly get close and pick up the strange object while the others stared. As soon the poor fella picked up the grenade, the three minute time-delay fuse of the grenade expired.

The blinding white flash accompanied by the deafening sound of the flashbang incapacitated everyone, sending them screaming to the ground. While they struggled to regain their ability to see and hear, Chief decided to make his entrance.

Walking in, he casually snapped the Batarian's neck who was holding the Grenade. Moving on he smashed another ones head with the Titanium clad hilt of his rifle followed by a swift kick to another's stomach, breaking his spine. He then proceeded to two slavers who were only just beginning to recover from the flash effect. Chief used the weight of his foot to simply crush one of their necks while blowing up the others head with a point blank shot that bypassed the barriers. Only after this did he begin to come under fire from the remaining two survivors. Quickly moving in, he disarmed both of them and buried his combat knife deep inside ones chest. The he focused on the sole remaining slaver who Cortana indentified as the Captain of the ship. Holding him by his throat, he pulled up the alien to his level.

"Captain Nola," Chief stated "By the authority invested in me by the United Nations Space Command, I will here by be commanding this ship for UNSC. You are here by relieved of your command."

With that chief shoved a barrel of MA5C under Nola's head and pulled the trigger.

"You just had to be all professional, didn't you?" Cortana said in a slightly sarcastic tone.

"Well we are taking his ship, he at least deserved that." Chief replied as he put down the lifeless body. "You were sayingâ€|"

"Oh yes, after the Turians unleashed the genophage, the Korguns lost their main advantageâ€|" Cortana continued with the history lesson while Chief began walking towards what looked like the main command table.

Act 2: Unwanted Attention

January/11/2662

Milky Way / Hades Gamma Cluster / Antaeus System

Near Planet Hunidor

Onboard the ITSS Prometheus.

Commander Katyusha braced herself in her chair. The voyage through the relay was quite shaky, the turbulence was a lot more then what

was expected. "Kika, report." She ordered.

KiKa's cobalt coloured avatar appeared on Katyusha's chairs holoprojector "The ships went through some turbulence while traveling through the relay, no damage to the ship or its' system, the engineering crews are trying to understand the cause of the turbulence". Kika replied.

"Theories." Katyusha said.

"It seems the ships mass effect core is somehow connected to the relay." Kika replied, "It somehow uses the ezso inside the core to propel the ship into FTL speeds. The bigger the core is, the smoother the ride would be."

"I see." Katyusha said. "Keep me posted."

"Yes Commander." With that reply, Kika disappeared.

Katyusha turned towards Boris "I need a full scan of this system"

"Understood, Commander." With that reply Boris turned to the Felix and nodded. Being a minor military ship in the IBSF, the Prometheus lacked its' own dedicated officer for monitoring the sensors and such. The communication officer takes on the role in non-combat situation while the AI handles it during combat.

"It's a fairly big system Commander". Felix reported. "There are six planets orbiting that star. The planet closest to the star is a standard terrestrial planet of which has a relatively thin atmosphere. The second one is a gas giant, so is the third one. The fourth one is also a terrestrial world however unlike the first one, it'sâ€¦" Felix's voice froze in shock and terror as something popped up on his screen. "MULTIPLE CONTACTS!" he screamed at the top of his lungs. "Heading straight for us!"

"Kika, report." Swallowing her own shock, Katyusha issued the order.

"Approximately sixty-eight vessels of various sizes are heading at us at lightspeed." Kika reported.

"Lightspeed! In real space?" Katyusha eyes went narrow. "How?"

"Judging by their out of the chart element zero signature, I can only speculate that they are using them to reduce their ships mass to such level that it became possible to propel the ship at lightspeed using conventional engines." Kika said.

"Are they.." Katyusha was about to ask a series of question but Kika decided to save her commander the trouble.

"Alien? Yes, their ships are nothing like we have ever seen. Kika interrupted Katyusha and started to reply to the obvious questions. "Military? Their ships' design and formations suggest so. Also I'm detecting some sort of MAC on many of the larger ones. Hostile? From what I can tell they seem to be spinning up their MAC's so that is unfortunately a yes. "

While various thoughts went through the minds of the bridge crew after hearing this, most of them filled with anxiety and fear, Katyusha's thoughts were short and filled with frustration:

"Damm you sis!"

Coming back to reality, Katyusha ordered "Boris, order action station."

Nodding, Boris quickly issued the standard order through the ships comm-channel:

"Action station, action station. All hands report to their combat stations. This is not a drill. Evacuate and seal off all non-combat sections, power down all non-essential systems and await further orders. "

Throughout the ship, klaxons rang out and the well trained and regularly drilled crew went to work. Places like the cafeteria, cargo bay and crew compartments were hastily evacuated and sealed off. The power from those sections were redirected towards more essential and combat oriented systems. Damage control teams geared up and reported to their designated positions along with auxiliary gunners and engineers. The infirmary was hastily prepared for possible incoming wounded while the ships small marine contingent quickly took defensive positions around the critical sections including the hatches to repel boarders. Within three minutes, the ship was ready for combat.

"All stations reported in commander." Boris relayed the message to Katyusha after receiving the confirmations.

Nodding, Katyusha turned to Kika, whose avatar's kimono was now replaced by a UNSC uniform to show her transition to "action station", and issued orders:

"Kika, send the standard first contact message to the closest ship as soon as they get in communication range. The shields are your priority for now and will be until I say otherwise. Keep the primary weapon systems along with the main reactor power in standby mode, I want you create a small power signature." She said. "Also create an ECM field around our ships to mask most of our weapon systems from their scans. Overall, make us look as less threatening as possible. They may just be doing a routine interception."

"With sixty-eight ships, Sir?" Felix voice expressed obvious doubts.

Katyusha examined the ships shown in the holographic tactical display in front of her. "There are only three ships in the formation that have the size and tonnage to be considered as light cruisers. The rest look like frigates, corvettes and prowlers." She said. "Not exactly what one would call a war fleet, looks more like a task force for planetary defense flotilla, a big one." She added. "We may have stumbled upon one of their important trade routes that need to be routinely defended from pirates, or they simply may have a military installation in this system." She shrugged. "In either case, we would've probably done the same thing if an unknown and possibly alien ship jumped in."

"True." Boris admitted. "So do you think they are going to attack, Sir?" He asked with a cautious tone.

"I'm saying there's a possibility that these aliens aren't just another branch of murdering overzealous fanatics." Katyusha replied with a bit of frustration. "But we should keep up our guard, just in case."

Boris nodded "Understood, Sir." He replied with a far more confident tone than before.

"The ships are slowing down to real time speed." Kika reported. "They should be within two hundred miles of us in less than fifteen minutes. The message has been sent."

"Alright," Katyusha replied with a bit of concern. "Now we wait."

Everybody in the bridge held their breath and waited for the alien's response. Everyone was wondering the same question: what will happen?

Act 3: Deadly Misunderstanding.

January/11/2662

Milky Way / Hades Gamma Cluster / Antaeus System

Near Planet Hunidor

Onboard the Turian Dreadnought Pride of Palaven.

Captain Mankanaze looked at the newly arrived ships with amazement. The ship was bigger than the one that came before, and looked much more fit for combat. It had a somewhat sleek dart-like body, with two pods on the sides containing the engines. It was painted in a light grey color with two large symbols on the pods. Mankanaze assumed that it was either the insignia of their navy or the flag of their civilization. What he found really interesting about this ship was its' power to size ratio. The ship was no bigger than a standard frigate but had a power output similar to that of a heavy cruiser. But the most surprising thing about this ship was however its ezzo core. According to the emission reports, it had a smaller output than a civilian freighter. What was puzzling in all this however, was the ships unusual weapon set. It seemed to have a MAC and some defensive weapons. It is quite unusual for a frigate to have MAC, although this ships power output indicates that it should be able to pack an even bigger punch. Mankanaze guessed the extra power was being redirected to the shields as their ratings are roughly comparable to that of a small Batarian dreadnought. Overall, he concluded, a formidable ship.

"It seems you were right about them being aggressive, Sir." Mankanaze said to General Desolas "This ship was not built with peaceful intentions."

"She's a predator, Captain." Desolas said. "Clearly the ship is fitted with a gigantic non ezzo power source, possibly nuclear to power its weapons and shields, leaving very little room for anything

else. It's a prime example of their primitive way of thinking. However," He added "This also confirms that their homeworld is either on the other side of this relay or at least in the same system. I strongly doubt this ship can carry enough rations to feed its' crew for even a month. Let's not think about the living conditions either, they probably don't even have bunk beds."

"Indeed." Mankanaze with a bit of regret in his voice. "Sir, Iâ€|"

"Don't apologize, Captain." Desolas interrupted him. "You were concerned about the wellbeing of the men and women that were trusted under your command like any good commander would. But regardless of your personal opinion, you followed your superior officer's order like any good Turian would. That is not something to be frowned upon, but rather something to be commended."

"Iâ€|" Mankanaze paused briefly. "Thank you, sir." He finally said.

"No kind of gratitude required, Captain," Desolas said with a smile on his face. "Come, let us put this barbaric species in the path of enlightenment."

"Captain, we have received a transmission from the alien ship." Before Mankanaze could reply, they were interrupted by the ships communications officer.

Nodding in response, Mankanaze turned to Desolas, "What should be done, Sir?" He asked.

Desolas shrugged. "It's probably a First contact message they created just in case they face an adversary they can't handle," He said. "Regardless, I doubt the Turian Hierarchy or any major Citadel race would be interested in establishing diplomatic relations with a civilization as small and as primitive as this one. Best we ignore it and proceeded with our mission. "

"We should disable and capture this ship, Sir." A junior officer, who was listening to the entire conversation, spoke up. "We may gain some valuable information from the ship's crew and computer."

"Good thinking, Lieutenant." Despite the fact that what the junior officer stated was obvious, Mankanaze chose to complement him to maintain moral.

He opened up the fleetwide channel that his communications officers kept on standby and spoke up:

"Attention all ships, you are to engage and disable the enemy ship." He stated. "The ship is likely to be slow due to the massive power core it's carrying, so frigates move in rapidly and try to quickly knock out the ship's barriers. Cruisers take your time and aim for the ships vital components. The ship is equipped with a MAC, so disabling it should be your main priority. However, under no circumstances are you allowed to destroy the ship, which means the dreadnaughts are to hold their fire. The information contained within their databanks would be valuable for us to finish this campaign swiftly. May the spirits be in your favor. "

With that, Mankanaze ended the transmission.

End
file.